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Scripture testimony to the
doctrine of the Trinity

SCRIPTURE TESTIMONY

TO THE

DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY;

IN FOUR SERMONS,

PREACHED BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY,

BY

THE REV. EDMUND MORTLOCK, B.D.

FELLOW OF CHRIST'S COLLEGE.

WITH NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

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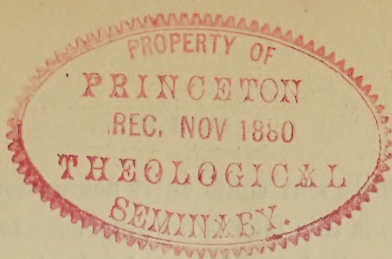
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PREFACE.

THE following Discourses were delivered by me before the University, in the month of January 1842, having been appointed the Afternoon Preacher for that month. Some trifling changes and additions have been since made to them, to which it is not necessary to advert more particularly.

So much has been written, and so ably, upon the doctrine of the Trinity, that it seems a presumption, especially in one having no pretension to superior learning or ability, to enter publicly upon this field. His excuse must be found, if at all, in some novelty in his mode of dealing with the subject.

It is by this plea that I would justify my attempt. It has always appeared to me, that the evidence the most intelligible and convincing on this question, to the *general* reader, lies in the *multiplicity* and *variety* of Scriptural allusion to it, rather than in the strength and clearness of particular texts. I by no means regard this latter testimony as weak or insufficient, even *alone*. But cavils may often be here raised, on critical grounds, which they who are not thoroughly skilled in the ancient languages are unable to judge of, and so are left in some doubt and perplexity. But if it be shewn that a consistent vein of evidence runs through the whole of Scripture, breaking out in every part, and in every form, it

will be readily and confidently acknowledged and felt by them, that this fact is no otherwise to be accounted for, than by the intention of the Author of revelation to hold up the truth, thus pervading his Word, to the faith of mankind, for whose instruction that Word was given.

But while this accumulative evidence is the most effectual, it is by no means the easiest to present in a connected discourse. Hence the proofs commonly offered in this way, are those grounded on a selection of the more striking Scriptural assertions, or on detailed statements of some one branch of evidence, or on a mere outline of the whole. There are indeed works which comprise the chief portion of the texts which bear on the subject. That of Dr S. Clarke presents all that are found in the New Testament; but it omits all reference to the Old. And moreover it exhibits the most remarkable passages of the New, interpreted after his own particular views. Jones's "Catholic Doctrine of the Trinity" embraces, though not with all this fulness, the evidence of *both* revelations, and has for its aim to counteract the bias of Dr Clarke. Dr James Knight's "Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity" is merely in reply to the same Author, and is confined to a narrower range. There is also the Tract of Mr Wm. Hey, referred to by his brother. But in these works, the texts, though classed under general heads, are presented without other connexion. My aim has been to bring together as many as possible, but also with enough of arrangement, and of reasoning upon them, to make them conduce to one common end and impression;

and this in a popular style. And I have added, in the way of notes, a brief description of the origin and aim of the creeds of the Church, and an outline of the chief dissentient opinions, and such other miscellaneous matter illustrative of the subject, as it seems to me that every educated Christian should possess, on the doctrine which forms the very foundation of that religion, on his honest and intelligent adoption of which depends his well-being in a future life. I have indulged a hope, that many who are competent to entertain such matter, but who would remain ignorant of it, from want of leisure or inclination to search for it in the volumes of different authors, may be not unwilling to give it a due attention, when presented in one view, in a compendious form. It has been on these grounds, and not from the hope of throwing further light on the subject, that I have ventured upon my present undertaking. I am much better satisfied of the usefulness of such a work, than of my own competency for it.

The third Sermon is much taken up with an argument, which, though not new, has not commonly been brought forward. One of the positions on which it is grounded, has not hitherto been universally acquiesced in. I allude to the proof of the real nature of our Lord's pretensions, from the conduct of the *unbelieving* Jews, and the motives of it. I have endeavoured to establish, that in *their* view he asserted his divine nature; and that, not expecting this in their Messiah, they regarded the claim as impious, and on *this* ground condemned him. If such is made out to be their construction of his

language, and the cause of their hostility, a strong testimony is thus afforded to the nature of his pretensions, which is all *we* require to ascertain, who are satisfied of his truth. What in these premises has not been hitherto acknowledged generally, is, that the Jews, at the time of our Saviour's advent, expected in their Messiah *merely a temporal and earthly Prince*. But it is, I think, certainly true; of the *generality* of this people, at any rate.

In the notice which I have taken of Mr. Locke, in connexion with this argument, in this Sermon and in the notes upon it, I believe I have not been wholly anticipated.

I have uniformly given references to authors of repute, on every point of any importance, for the convenience of those who may wish to investigate it further. I have referred to several authorities, where one might have been sufficient, because some of the works quoted, which are of weight, are not accessible to all. I shall be satisfied, if I succeed in promoting a more accurate knowledge, and a firmer faith, on this important subject, with some of the younger of the educated laity, to whom I have chiefly had regard.

As many of the references are to volume and page, it may be of use to specify the particular editions referred to :—

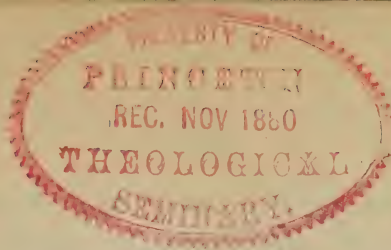
✓ Waterland, Works.	Oxford. 1823
Cudworth, Intellect. Syst.	1829
Pearson on the Creed.	1843
Allix, Judgment of the Jewish Church.	1821
✓ Ridley's Lady Moyer's Lect.	1802
✓ Cleaver's Sermons.	1808

Whitby, Tract. De vera Christi Deitate.	1691
Whitby's Last Thoughts.	London. 1822
Lardner, Works.	1788
Locke, ... ditto.	1824
Lightfoot, ditto.	1823
Stillingfleet, ditto.	1710
Tillotson, Sermons.	1728
Wall, Hist. of Inf. Baptism.	1819
Berriman, Sermons on the Trinity.	1725
Dr Gill on the Trinity.	1752
Dr S. Clarke's Sermons.	1731
Burgess, Tracts on the Divinity of Christ.	1820
Wm. Hey's Tracts.	1822
Wardlaw on the Socinian Controversy.	1819
Macknight, Harmony of the Gospels.	1819
Channing, Works.	1834
Toulmin's Life of Socinus.	1777
Rees's Racovian Catechism.	1818
Hey, Lectures.	Camb. 1822
Potter, (Edm.) Vind. of our Bl. Saviour's Div.	1714
Wilson, Method of explaining the New Test.	1838
Horsley, Tracts.	Dundee. 1812

The references to Bull, Mosheim, Dr S. Clarke's "Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity," Dr J. Knight's do. and Bingham, serve alike for any edition.

The work of Mr. Edmund Potter, of Emmanuel College, is characterised by Bishop Van Mildert as Life of Waterland, p. 52. "perhaps one of the ablest" productions drawn forth by Dr S. Clarke's work, and was highly esteemed by Dr Clarke himself. No copy of it is found in the Library of the University: I obtained it from that of his own College.

CHRIST'S COLLEGE,
May 15, 1844.



SERMON I.

MATTH. XXVIII. 19.

Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

WHEN we read that the prophet Elijah was sustained many days by the widow of Zarephath, and that "the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail," "who knoweth not that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this?" And when again, that "five thousand were fed with five barley-loaves, and twelve baskets filled with the fragments which remained," we discern the finger of God. But we see the herb yield the seed of harvest, the produce of oft-renewed increase from the day of creation, and bearing within its little bulk the germ of future in-gatherings till time shall be no more, without adverting to his instrumentality therein. Even the more marvellous accomplishment, in our own nature, of the divine blessing, "Be fruitful and multiply," raises not our thoughts to him. As if reason did not acquaint us, that manifold and successive production bespeaks an almighty author, as certainly as any single or novel sign from heaven.

Minds thus regardless of the lessons of nature, may well stagger at those of Revelation. Whoso is not "exercised in the works of God's hands," must needs find difficulty in his *Word*. But they who

look abroad upon the world and all that therein is, in connexion with the Maker of all, acquire an aptitude for divine truth, through their notice of his greatness, and of the narrow bounds of their own faculties.

There is not a process of nature, however simple or familiar, that we can at all see into. The grain sown to-day, becomes perhaps, after a while, a part of the very hand which strewed it. Milk is converted in the infant into flesh, blood, bone, hair, all the many and unlike, liquid and solid parts, which make up man's frame : so corn and animal nourishment at a later age. All these aliments have themselves sprung in some sort from the herb of the field : so true is it, that, not only in sameness

Isai. xl. 6, 7. of frailty, but also of origin, "all flesh is grass, surely the people is grass." While we know this to be, we understand not at all *how* it is. We can detect nothing of the internal constitution of things, or of the powers of life and growth. Neither can we discover how the soul—the principle in us of thought, will, and affection, that which weighs and compares, chooses and refuses, loves and hates, suffers and enjoys—how this subtle and invisible, but living and busy essence, is united to our gross body, acts upon it, moves it, and in return receives impressions from it. If we have become fully sensible,

Wisd. ix. 16. that "hardly do we guess aright at things that are upon earth;" that we cannot surmise how ought we see is brought about; if we ponder this truth, so as to mould our feelings to it; then are we taught to own the unsearchableness of God's ways,

by whom every thing exists as it is, and to receive with modest deference whatever instruction he hath deigned to impart to us; and more especially *in what regards himself*. The mind that is conscious of its incapacity to grasp the *least* of the divine works—to “pierce into the nature of a pebble, Barrow. or apprehend how a mushroom doth grow”—expects not to “find out the Almighty unto perfection;” Job xi. 7. is prepared to believe, that he who made us and all things, and us differing from all things, and all one from another, himself hath *distinction from every creature of his hand*. When we have been brought to note, how much comes to pass daily, which unseen we should have deemed impossible, as that a small dry grain yieldeth “first the Mark iv. 8. blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear,” an acorn an oak, and an egg fluttereth “a Ps. lxxviii. 13. dove that is covered with silver wings, and her feathers like gold;” then, remoteness from expectation and example, in a communication from heaven touching the *Divine Nature*, ceases to be regarded as a just ground of doubt. We should rather be surprised *not* to find in it much that is unlike to our present experience, and above our present comprehension.

It is at all times useful thus to school the mind, by reflection on the weakness and shortness of its powers, and the scantiness of its knowledge, even as to the ordinary products of nature which lie within the observation of our senses, when we are about to handle the *heavenly* truths which reach us only by revelation of God. We learn to acquiesce in what

is above our imagination, in matters of religion, when we see nothing to be *intrinsically* level to it anywhere. And of the doctrines pertaining to the *Divine Being himself*, there is none which calls not for this preparatory discipline. *All* involve difficulties, if we allow our faith to be staggered by a want of conception as to the *manner* of what we are taught. We read that "God is a spirit." Yet we understand not at all the mode of spiritual existence, and must therefore doubt that of God, if we believe nothing which we cannot comprehend. So the attributes and operations of his infinite and inconceivable essence—his eternity, his omnipresence at every instant, his foreknowledge, his creation of all things, his promised renewal of the *same* life in us at the resurrection—baffle all the powers of our intellect, if we would reconcile the semblance of impossibility, and even contradiction, which they present to our hood-winked view, when we endeavour to frame particular notions of them. Yet we do not on this account doubt that they are truly revealed, or we should want the very motives of our worship. We copy the reasonable faith of David, who, reflecting on some of these things, confessed, as to the *manner* of them, "such knowledge to be too wonderful for him," and unattainable; yet lived under a firm and awful conviction of their reality, which his "soul knew right well,"

John iv. 24. *on the testimony of God.*

Ps. cxxxix. 6. *on the testimony of God.*

Ps. cxxxix. 14.

The doctrine which I would introduce to your consideration by such views, is that of *the Trinity*. Like other truths which relate to the manner of

the divine subsistence, it is necessarily¹ remote from our apprehension. Yet not on this account does God dispense^a with our belief of what he has seen^a fit to make known to us. Though the term itself is not found in scripture², it will be my aim to shew that the propositions which we compendiously express by it, are certainly disclosed therein; and, however inscrutable to our fancy, are held up as matter of bounden faith.

The word *Trinity* is employed to represent the fundamental truth of our religion; viz. that, in the language of the first article of our Church, "There is but one living and true God, the maker and preserver of all things: and in unity of this Godhead there be three Persons^b, of one substance, power, and eternity." Or, in the words of the Athanasian Creed, that "The Father is God, the Son is God, and the

¹ "Is it possible that any doctrine concerning the *Nature of the Deity* should be without its difficulties? When the infinite distance is considered between man and his Maker, it seems reasonable to presume that there must be mysteries, far above the reach of the human understanding, both in the nature of God, and in the plan of his government; that the fullest discovery that could be made, of God and of his ways, to the human intellect, must be imperfect; because however perfect in itself, it would be but imperfectly apprehended. No difficulties, therefore, short of a contradiction, can be allowed to constitute an objection to a doctrine claiming divine original. On the contrary, it should rather seem, that to involve difficulties, must be one *characteristic of a divine revelation*; and its *greatest* difficulties may reasonably be expected to lie in those parts which immediately respect the *nature of God*, and the *manner of his existence*." Bishop Horsley's Letters to Dr Priestley, Lett. xv. "On the Province of Reason, with respect to its enquiry into Scripture Truths," See Burgh's Confutation of Lindsay, ch. 1.

² The Greek word corresponding to "Trinity," occurs first (in works now extant) in the writings of Theophilus, bishop of Antioch, A.D. 180. (Waterland, iii. 413. Hey, B. iv. Art. 1. § 4. Berriman, p. 73.)

Holy Ghost is God: and yet they are not three Gods, but one God."

Reason and Revelation conspire to establish the *Unity* of God. Though the heathen worshipped many deities, the harmony of design and regularity of production throughout the works of nature, suggested to the wiser¹ among them, that there could be but *One Creator* of all, one *Supreme God*; and if one Supreme, but one truly God. Scripture, whence alone we seek our creed, plainly inculcates the same

Deut. xxxiii.
27.

Jer. xxiii.
24.

Gen. xvii. 1.
Gen. i. 1.

Gen. ii. 7.

Gen. ii. 19.

Gen. ii. 5.

Acts xiv. 17.

Ps. cxlvii. 8.

Ps. cxlvii. 9.

lesson. One eternal, infinite, almighty Being announces himself therein to man, as author of the world, and of him, and of all things. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth:" "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground:" "Out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every fowl of the air," "every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew." We read also, that he who made, by his single providence sustains them: "He giveth rain from heaven and fruitful seasons:" "He maketh grass to grow upon the mountains:" "He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young

¹ Dr Cudworth shews that the *natural* idea of a God includes "oneness and singularity;" and that "the pagan theologers all along acknowledged one sovereign and omnipotent Deity, from which all their other gods were generated or created:" and that "the pagan polytheism and idolatry consisted, not in worshipping *many* creators, or uncreateds, but in giving religious worship to creatures, *besides the Creator*." (Intell. Syst. Pref. and c. iv. see particularly section xxvi—xxx.) Dr Grabe, however, justly observes that such knowledge as to the divine nature, did not extend to the common people (see his notes to Bishop Bull. J. E. C. ch. v. vi. vii. n. 3). See also Tillotson (Serm. "On the Unity of God," from 1 Tim. ii. 5); Pearson (Art. "I believe in God"); and Locke (Reasonableness of Christianity. Works, vi. 135).

ravens which cry:" and "to man, the bread which strengtheneth his heart, and wine that maketh it glad." Whatsoever is done in all the earth, he doeth it alone. "I (saith he) form the light and create darkness: I make peace and create evil: I, the Lord, do all these things." He moreover is proclaimed as the moral governor of the world: "God is the judge: he putteth down one and setteth up another." He it is who hath revealed himself to man: "He made known his ways unto Moses:" "He spake unto the fathers by the prophets, and in these last days hath spoken unto us by his Son."

That he is "*God alone*," is carefully and even *jealously* proclaimed: "Hear, O Israel; the Lord thy God is one Lord²:" "I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God:" "I am God, and there is none else:" "Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be any after me:" "Thou shalt know no God but me:" "Thou shalt worship no other God^c." Thus peremptorily doth he deny the existence of any co-ordinate or rival nature, by a testimony which is renewed from the mouth of his Son, after whom the Apostle beareth witness; "There is none other God but one."

But comparing scripture with scripture, as becometh those who would gather its true purport, we soon find these declarations to be aimed against *idolatry*³,

² For the proper force of this and similar texts, see Waterland's sermon upon it; Works, vol. ii. Sermon. iv. Also Dr Knight's Tract. ch. 1. Texts i—v. viii. Dr Gill, ch. 1.

³ There is no assertion of the unity of God in the Old Testament, until mention is made of idolatry; and in most of the texts referred to in the margin, there is express allusion to this sin. See Waterland Def.

Ps. civ. 15.
Comp. Is.
xlii. 5.

Isai. xlv. 7.

Ps. lxxv. 7.

Ps. ciii. 7.

Heb. i. 1, 2.

Isai. xxxvii.
16.
Exod. xx. 5.
Deut. vi. 4.
Isai. xlv. 6.

Isai. xlv. 22.

Isai. xliiii.
10.
Hos. xiii. 4.

Exod. xxxiv.
14.
^c See note
C.

Mark xii. 29.

1 Cor. viii.
4.

See
Exod. xx.
3—5;
xxiii. 24, 25;
xxxiv. 13, 14.

Deut. iv.
15—20;
xiii. 6, 7, 10;
xxii.
37—39.

Exod. xx. 5;
xxiv. 14.
Is. xlii. 8.

and the union of *false objects of worship* in the honour due unto “the only true God;” and to have no respect to the secrets of *his own nature*, to what he is *metaphysically*, in himself. He who hath declared himself “one, and a jealous God,” who “will not give his glory to another, nor his praise to graven images;” hath yet revealed to our faith, and held up to our adoration two beings intimately united in all the fulness and perfections of his own essence; thus exhibiting the asserted mystery of a tri-unal Deity, “*three Persons, and one God.*” The divine *unity* needing no further proof, it is to this *plurality* of *Persons* in it, that we have now to present the testimony of God’s own word.

Of this doctrine, though not fully made known until these sacred Beings wrought on earth in the salvation of man, various premonitory notices were vouchsafed in the Old Testament. It opens, in the original language, with a manner of expression not imitable in ours, which would be anomalous and unaccountable, unless shaped to this truth. The title given to the Creator has a plural form¹, bespeaking

Gen. i. 1.

of Qu. i. and Wilson, note p. 42, from Justin. Socinus admits this aim of all such language. See Racov. Cat. sect. v. ch. i. (p. 195 of Rees’s Trans.)

¹ The Hebrew word here rendered “God,” is “Elohim,” Gods: the form of the same word, in the *singular*, is “Eloah,” “God.” The Hebrew language has also different terminations for *verbs*, in the singular and plural: and here the verb rendered by “made,” is in the *singular*, though the noun “Elohim,” Gods, is *plural*.

The Jews employed by Ptolemy to translate the Old Testament into Greek, well aware of the natural inference from this language, changed the Hebrew plural, “Elohim,” into a Greek singular, Θεός. And their own commentators expressly assign as the reason, that they feared lest Ptolemy should take them for *polytheists*: which shews their conscious-

number; while the verb, which expresses the act of creation, has a *singular* ending, and so denotes an agent, in some sense, *one*. Nor does this seeming solecism occur in this place only, or with respect to one only of the divine titles: the use of it is frequent and various, and admits of but one intelligible explanation. It must be a fact of some importance, that the sacred writers, whose inspired lessons were intended for a safeguard from polytheism, continually employ a construction, which is accurate and significant, only if, in the one Godhead, there exists some multiplicity. We cannot believe it to have been adopted, by an inspired writer, in a matter so grave, by chance, or through negligence. If, taken alone, this peculiarity could be thought of little weight, and attributable to a mere idiom of the Hebrew tongue; it surely claims a different estimation, when, in the same book, we meet with doctrines announced by other and clearer modes of expression, which render this startling form of speech pertinent and just.

Such is the case. When it is written, that, before man was created, "God *said*;" it is herein implied, Gen. i. 3. that there were "in the beginning with God," whom John i. 1.

ness, that some plurality in the Godhead is, at least *apparently*, implied by this form of expression. They took a like liberty with other texts, for the same reason.

This plural, "Elohim," is found thirty times in the writings of Moses, and five hundred times in other parts of the sacred writings, and sometimes with adjectives and participles in the plural. So that Dr Allix says, "There is no way of speaking by which a plurality in God may be signified, but it is used in the Old Testament."

"The Jews have forbidden their common people the reading of the history of the creation, lest, understanding it literally, it should lead them into *heresy*." Allix, ch. ix. Dr Gill, ch. ii. Ridley's second Moyers' Lecture. Wardlaw, Disc. 1.

he might address; and the saying which he spake,
 Gen. i. 26. "Let *us*¹ make man in *our* image," acknowledges
 in them a communion in his own majesty and power.
 The same inference is afforded by other and similar
 Gen. iii. 22. passages: "Man is become as one of *us*:" "Let *us*
 Gen. xi. 7. go down and confound their language." For the
 prophet forbids us to understand these expressions
 of any *creature*, asking, "with whom took God coun-
 Isai. xl. sel?" It is nowhere hinted of *angels*², that they
 Comp. xliv. concurred in the production of the world, or in dis-
 24. and pensing mercy or wrath to man. No mention is
 Rom. xi. 34. made of them in the history of the creation. The
 Isai. vi. 8. same manner of expression occurs in the prophetical
 Isai. xli. 22. writings."

Gen. xviii. The "three men" who stood by Abraham, when
 1, 2. it is said, "Jehovah appeared unto him," were held
 by the ancient Jews to represent the number of sacred
 Isai. vi. 3. persons in the one Godhead³. "*Holy, holy, holy* is
 the Lord of Hosts," the song of the seraphims heard
 by Isaiah, was also understood by them to point, by
 the reiteration, the same way; and, regarded in the

¹ This is another of the texts, which the translators of the Septuagint thought it necessary to disguise, lest it should mislead Ptolemy into a belief that they were polytheists. (Allix, p. 100. Gill, ch. ii.) It is also one of those relied upon by the early Christians, in their reasonings with the Jews, for the divinity of the Son, in which they were compelled to ground their proofs on the language of the Old Testament. Allix, ch. xx. Also the Bishop of Lincoln's Justin Martyr, p. 70.

² Dr Whitby tells us, that all the early Christian fathers believed the Apostle Paul, in his Epistle to the Colossians, to aim at the heresy of Simon Magus and the Gnostics, who held the world to have been the *work of angels*; and that, for this reason, he so expressly acquaints us, that Christ was the maker of *them*, as of all things else. (Tract, p. 37.)

³ See Allix, ch. x: as also for the texts following. "*Men*" here signifies "beings"—"persons"—without reference to their nature; as in Dan. ix. 21, "The *man* Gabriel." Comp. Luke i. 11, 19.

same light by the Christian church, was introduced and paraphrased, as a confession of the Trinity, in one of the most ancient and sublime portions of its Liturgy. This triple recital of the divine title is frequent with the inspired writers, and is not otherwise to be accounted for. Thus the same Prophet says, “The *Lord* is our judge, the *Lord* is our lawgiver, the *Lord* is our king.” With like repetition doth Daniel make his petition: “O *Lord*, hear; O *Lord*, forgive; O *Lord*, hearken and do.” A perpetual form of blessing, in the name of the Lord, was dictated to Moses, for the priests, in which is a like recurrence; but with a mark of distinction⁴, in each case, significant in the Jewish language, but not transferable to our own: “The *Lord* bless thee and keep thee; the *Lord* make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the *Lord* lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.” Can we doubt this to be a contrived shadow of the doctrine clearly presented in its close parallel: “The grace of the *Lord Jesus Christ*, and the love of *God*, and the communion of the *Holy Ghost* be with you”? As if in proof that

^{The Te Deum, v. 3—11.}

^{Isai. xxxiii. 22.}

^{Dan. ix. 19.}

^{Numb. vi. 22—29.}

^{2 Cor. xiii. 14.}

⁴ Bishop Patrick (ad loc.) says: “The repetition of the name three times, and that with a *different accent in each of them* (as R. Menachen observes), hath made the *Jews themselves* think there is some mystery in it, which *we* understand, though *they* do not. For it may be well looked upon by us as having respect to the three persons of the blessed Trinity, who are one God, from whom all blessings flow to us (2 Cor. xiii. 14). This mystery, as Luther wisely expresses it, (upon Psalm v.) is here “occultè insinuaturn”—secretly insinuated, though not plainly revealed. And it is not hard to shew, if this were a place for it, how properly God the *Father* may be said to “bless and keep us;” and God the *Son* to be “gracious unto us;” and God the *Holy Ghost*, to “give us peace.”

He acquaints us (in a note on v. 27) that “the Jews think it utterly unlawful to add a *fourth* benediction to these three.”

Isai. lxiii. 7, these were not unmeaning iterations, the “great goodness” bestowed on the house of Israel is ascribed to a three-fold source; unto “*the Lord*,” unto the

“*Angel*¹ of his presence,” and to “his *Holy Spirit*.”

Is. lix. 19, 20. And, in like manner, *prospective* blessings: “When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the *Spirit* of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him, and the *Redeemer* shall come to Zion, saith *the Lord*.”

It is impossible to account, in writers under the divine guidance, for so much language at variance with the grand, fundamental doctrine of their religion, the *unity* of God, in any other way, than of its being intended to hint the mysterious truth of a *Trinity*, which the gospel was afterwards to unfold. And it should not detract much from our confidence in this view, that the doctrine is not more distinctly set forth. It is of the very nature of *prophetic* notices, to be more or less obscure, until light is reflected upon them from the later revelations, for which they were designed to prepare the way, and whose discoveries they were not meant to anticipate, but to confirm. The same indistinctness attached to the greater part of the predictions relative to the Messiah’s *person and reign*. The words convey just the kind of intimation usually given, of knowledge reserved, in the divine counsels, for the fulness of a more convenient season. They served to suggest to the learned Jews, of old^d time, some notion of a Trinity of persons in the nature of the one “Lord God of Israel;” although it was lost sight of before the coming of the Saviour, through the long disuse by the people of the original language of

^d See note L.

¹ Comp. Exod. xxiii. 20, 21, clearly referring to the Son of God.

Scripture, and the multitude of fanciful and superstitious glosses, which time had accumulated, engrossing the attention of the scribes, and “making the word of God of none effect.” To these ancient opinions, it seems not altogether improbable, St Paul may refer, when, in allusion to the religious homage which he paid and required to Christ and to the Holy Ghost, as to the Father, he says: “After the way which they call *heresy*, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing *all things which are written in the law and the prophets* ;” the true purport and *ancient interpretation* of the Old Testament having by this time been ascertained to him, by a more diligent enquiry, or by illumination of the Spirit. And to these opinions, we shall shortly see reason to believe, St John appeals, in the opening chapter^e of his gospel.

Mark vii. 13.

Acts xxiv. 14.

^e See p. 27, and note L.

But the union of three persons in the one godhead is taught, not so much in passages which mention them *collectively*, as in texts which intimate separately the distinct characters and divine majesty of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; and so, when *taken together*, establish this truth. It will, then, be our most convenient method, to consider apart the evidence respecting them. My present, and the two following discourses, will be taken up with such as relates to the eternal, uncreated Son, “Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory, both now and for ever! Amen.”

2 Pet. iii. 18.

When “sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned;” the magnitude of the consequences, no less than the voice of revelation, proved its malignity

Rom. v. 12.

in the sight of God. Reason, therefore, might have surmised, that should He accept the sufferings of
 Rom. v. 18. ONE, for the transgressions of all, and “by the righteousness of *one* the free gift should come upon all unto justification of life;” he who could be for such ends, *singly*, an adequate substitute for a whole race, must
 f See note be in *nature* far above them^f. There might thus be
 D. some proportion between the instrument and the vastness of his act and effect. It could not, therefore, properly be, and assuredly was not, a ground of doubt, to those who were taught by prophecy to raise their hopes to a future Saviour, to find him foretold therein under a *divine character*.

Such is the purport of many of the predictions
 touching the Messiah, and so were they anciently^g
 understood. God is spoken of in the Old Testament by sundry titles. *Jehovah*, the most hallowed, and incommunicable to any created being, signifies his eternal, necessary existence¹. It answereth to
 Exod. iii. 14; “I am,” the name by which he announced himself
 vi. 3. to Moses; and to “JAH,” by which he is extolled
 Ps. lxxviii. 4. in the book of Psalms. By it he declareth himself
 Isai. xlii. 8. through the prophet: “I am Jehovah; that is my name:” and he addeth, “My glory will I not give
 Ps. lxxxiii. to another.” Accordingly it is elsewhere said, “*His*
 18. name *alone* is Jehovah.” Yet this peculiar honour
 Dan. vii. 22. of the “Ancient of Days,” is often ascribed to the promised Redeemer²; establishing thus early, that

¹ See Waterland, 1st Def. of Qu. iii. also v. ii. 135. Bull, D. F. N. Sect. iii. ch. ii. n. 2. Potter, pp. 70, 71. Wardlaw, p. 77.

² See Bull and Waterland as in the last reference. Allix, Pref. p. iv. and ch. xviii.

“He and the Father are one,” in the excellence of the divine nature. God forewarned his people, that “He would send them one in whom his name should be;” and Jeremiah refers this glory to the future Messiah: “This is his name whereby he shall be called, Jehovah³ our Righteousness.” It is “*Jehovah*” who speaketh in another prophet, saying, “They shall look upon me whom they have *pierced*,” words which, even without the inspired application of St John, we might have gathered to belong to the *Incarnate* God. Isaiah, in a vision, “saw *Jehovah* sitting upon a throne high and lifted up,” of whom the seraphims cried one to another, and said; “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts:” and the evangelist acquainteth us, that he whose glory the prophet thus beheld, came in Christ⁴. The same prophet gave a sign of the advent of the Saviour, in “the voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of Jehovah; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.” And the forerunner, when he came, testified, that this saying was fulfilled in himself, who was “sent before *Christ*, that HE should be made manifest.” Christ⁵, therefore, was that “*Jehovah*,” that “*God*,” for whom the Baptist did make straight the way. A like testimony is afforded in the words of

John x. 30.

Exod. xxiii. 20, 21.

Jer. xxiii. 6.

Zech. xii. 10.

John xix. 37.
See Waterl.
ii. 19.
Isai. vi. 1, 3.

John xii. 41.

Isai. xl. 3.

John i. 23,
30, 31.
Mark i. 2, 3.
Luke i. 76.

³ “*Jehovah*” is rendered in our Bibles by, “the *LORD*,” in large characters: I have restored the original word, in the texts which I quote, as more convenient for the present object.

⁴ See Waterland, vol. II. 17—19, and the Fathers to whom he refers; Pearson, p. 160; and Whitby’s Tract, 117—119. It is enough for us that the *Apostles* apply such passages in the Old Testament to Christ. But Allix shews, that they only expressed herein the opinions of their *forefathers*. See ch. I. II. III. XVIII.—XX.

⁵ See Pearson (p. 187.)

the angel, who foretold to the father of the Baptist the fruit of his son's mission: "Many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God, and he shall go before *him*," &c. The "*Lord God*" it was, before whom he should go; but, as is evident from the context, in the person of *his Son*¹. Malachi, who closed the word of prophecy, described the "Messenger of the Covenant" as, "*Jehovah* who should come to his temple²," the seat of his proper worship; and *Christ* was that "messenger," and, by consequence, "*Jehovah*." On this, his future, personal visitation, is expressly grounded the boast of the prophet: "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former." The former had the symbol of the Divine presence, and a material splendour far surpassing: but to *this* building it was promised that the "*desire of all nations* should come, and fill the house with glory." In sundry^h other passages is the Messiah alluded to, under this hallowed title. But his divine character is announced by another like unequivocal assertion. For of whom, save of him, does Isaiah speak, when he says: "Unto us a child is born, unto us a *Son* is given: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, *The Mighty God*?" Such, that is, shall he truly be, in *himself*, in person and nature, after the force of

Luke i. 16,
17.

Comp. John
i. 1, 7, 8.

Mal. iii. 1.

Hag. ii. 9.

Comp. Hag.
ii. 3.
1 Kings vii.
viii.
Ezra iii. 12.
Hag. ii. 7.
Comp. Mal.
iii. 1.

^h See note
E.

Isai. ix. 6.

¹ Dr S. Clarke admits that the words, "the Lord their God," are, "in strictness of construction, immediately connected with the following word, '*Him*,' which must necessarily be understood of Christ." (Script. Doctr. No. 534.) See also Dr J. Knight, No. 534; and Wardlaw, pp. 77—79.

² The ancient Jews held that the temple was built for the "*Logos*" or "*Word*," the second Person in the Trinity, whom they always considered to be intended, when any *appearance of God* is spoken of. (Allix, pp. 205, 229.)

the word *name* in scriptural language. The Psalms contain a direct address to one, *as God*, which the Apostle affirms to have regard to him who was afterwards incarnate, and to proceed from the Father: “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.” As a perpetual and appropriate sign of this inherent dignity of the Messiah, it was pre-ordained to “call his name Immanuel; which being interpreted is, *God with us*.” In what sense the promise herein implied was fulfilled, we learn from the Apostle, who holds it up as the wonder of the Gospel scheme: “Great is the mystery of godliness: *God was manifest in the flesh*!” the divine nature was exhibited in union with that of man; corruption with incorruption; frailty with eternity. “The second man is *the Lord from heaven*.”

Comp. Deut. xii. 5.
2 Chron. vii. 2, 12.
Levit. xxiv. 16.
2 Sam. vi. 2.
Ps. lxxx. 18.

Ps. xlv. 6.
Heb. i. 8.

Isai. vii. 14.
Matt. i. 23.

1 Tim. iii. 16.
Comp. John i. 1—14.

See note F.

1 Cor. xv. 47.
Comp. John iii. 31.

But we are here entering upon the evidence of the Gospel. Its testimony to the divine nature of the Redeemer, is clear and manifold. That he is the *proper Son of God* may be regarded as being (after, as some think³, the purport of his declaration to Peter) “that rock”—that firm foundation—on which “His church should be built, against which the gates of hell should not prevail.” It was the first proclamation of St Paul⁴, after he had been instructed in the faith by the

Matt. xvi. 18.

³ ἐπὶ ταύτῃ τῇ πέτρᾳ—“on this rock.” That this expression refers not to Peter’s *person*, but to the *confession which he had just made*, of Christ’s true, natural relation to God^k, which was to be the fundamental doctrine of Christian faith, is the opinion of Chrysostom, and of others of the ancient fathers, as well as of many modern biblical critics; and, among these, of Mr Locke; though he construes the confession otherwise than we do. See “Reas. of Christ.” (Works, vol. vi. p. 18, 57.) I do not rely upon this interpretation.

^k See note C. Sermon. 11.

⁴ Bishop Horsley is of opinion, that the opening sermon of *Peter* Acts ii. 24.

Acts ix. 3, 4. Lord Jesus himself, from amidst a blaze of glory, like unto that which made known the divine presence to Moses, in the bush. Taught, in this open vision, the *true nature* of him whom he had persecuted, "straightway he preached Christ in the synagogue, that he is the *Son of God*¹." It is not pretended, that phrases grounded on human relations can fully, or accurately, represent the modes of *spiritual* being; still less those of the infinite and eternal essence of God. In all metaphorical illustrations, there is *some diversity* in the things compared. But there is also a *real resemblance*, or no instruction would be conveyed. The title of *Son* is selected, in the divine wisdom, and employed throughout the gospel, in an unexampled manner, to teach us the relation of Christ to God: and not this particular term only, but much of *agreeing allusion and discourse*. It must be the design of such language to point to a true parallel in the chief feature of this relation, as it exists in man; though with a difference of *manner* in it, according to the vast dissimilitude of the subjects. As in an human generation the primary condition is, a perfect communication of nature and properties; this term must be intended to intimate to us, in Christ, a full participation in the essence and nature of his Father;

¹ See Serm. II. towards the beginning.

contains intimations of the same truth, though less plainly declared; as there was at first the same necessity for the Apostles, as for their Master, to establish the truth of his *mission*, before they ventured undisguisedly upon that of his *nature*¹. St Paul commenced his ministry *later*, and under peculiar circumstances. See Horsley's 12th Letter to Priestly. (Tracts, p. 230.)

¹ The true force of this text will be better understood, after reading note L. Serm. III.

that as the son of man is man, so the "Son² of God," is *God*. Accordingly the Evangelist says of him, "We beheld his *glory*, the glory as of the *only-* John i. 14. *begotten* of the Father." On the other hand, the divine substance being one, and incapable of change, there must want, in the *manner* of its communication, the subordinate analogy of separation³, or multiplication, suited only to finite and created natures. Thus we are taught that "the Father is (ever) in John xiv. 10, 11. the Son, and the Son in the Father;" and the Comp. x. 30, 38. unity of the Godhead is unbroken. "I and my Father are One⁴," is his further exposition, both of this resemblance and of this distinction, in his mode of relation, for which "the Jews took up stones to stone him;" assuredly, not because they believed him to assert hereby a mere *harmony of will* So Arius held. Cudworth, iii. 172. with God, an innocent boast to their view; but, as the Evangelist distinctly informs us in *their own words*, "because that (thus), being a man, he *made himself* John x. 33. *God*." Such is the inference which they at once confidently drew from his words. Nor, in any lower sense of them, could he be considered as guilty of

² See an extract from Novatian in Bull. D. F. N. Sect. II. c. x. n. 6. "Ut enim præscripsit ipsa natura hominem credendum, qui ex homine sit; ita eadem natura præscribit et Deum credendum esse, qui ex Deo sit." Hey observes (Lect. B. IV. Art. II. Sect. 21.) "It is implied in the idea of a Son, that he is of the same species with his Father." See also Pearson, 173. See also Dr Gill, ch. VII.

³ See Bull. D. F. N. Sect. IV. c. IV. n. 9—14. Potter, pp. 19—22. Bishop of Lincoln's Justin, pp. 56, 64.

⁴ i. e. (says Dr Is. Watts) "One in *divine power and Godhead*, as the context leads us to expound it." (Serm. on the Trinity, Prop. XIV.) See also Dr J. Knight, ch. II. Text 594. Stillingfleet, "Disc. on the Trin." ch. VIII. (vol. III. 476.)

^m See Serm.
III. note D.
ⁿ See note
G.

“*blasphemy*^m.” And he did not denyⁿ the imputed pretension, now, or on any other occasion; which, had he been *misunderstood*, he would have done, rather than seem guilty of Herod’s sin, of falsely taking to himself the glory belonging to God. The Evangelist too, who relates the transaction at a later period, when the true meaning of Christ and of his accusers must have been well known to him, does not, in recording the very words of their charge, so clear in their purport, tax them with perversion of his master’s language. He must then have put upon it a like construction; from which he learned to know and reverence *as God*, him whom it led *them* to destroy as a “malefactor”—so far as they had the power.

That we may not look upon this filial relation of Christ to God, as like unto that humbler one, under which *we* are permitted to call him “Father,” may be gathered from the caution with which, while he owned his disciples for *brethren*, on account of that nature which he too derived from woman, he avoided the acknowledgment of any kindred with them, as *towards God*. He bade them pray after this manner: “*Our Father*.” His language for *himself* is suited to him alone, who is a Son without example, and such as *none other than he* ever presumed to employ: “*My Father*.” It is even, in one sentence, “My Father, and your Father;” but never in his use, “our,” so as to imply a community with us in this respect. And it may be remarked, as tending to the same conclusion, that he is never mentioned as joining with his disciples in prayer, so as to intimate his equal dependance on God; which otherwise would have been natural, and

Matt. vi. 9.

John viii. 19.
Matt. xxvi.
39.
John xx. 17.

of happy example. As a mere *man*, with however lofty a mission, he would not have shrunk from an avowal of his common obligation to the maker of all men. But he seems pointedly to except himself from any such parity with them, saying, "*My Father* John viii. 54. honoureth me, of whom ye say, that he is *your God*." In agreement with this view, he is emphatically called, "the *only-begotten Son*"—"the *only-begotten* of the John i. 14, 18. Father;" a Son by *generation*, and *alone such*; deriving the full nature of him, of whom he is, and John iii. 16, 18. so *without a fellow* in his relation. In any other sense, he had had *many* brethren. The frequency¹ too, and significancy of his allusions to God under this character, shew some new and important truth to be implied in it. And his habitual and *unexampled* employment of its correlative, "My Father," proves that the "Son of God" was no mere formal or *official* title, in his use; but the pregnant sign of a true filial communion in the Godhead. A like inference results from his concurrent assumption of the style of, "Son of man;" which being intended to denote his *human* nature, its parallel must needs have a corresponding force, and represent the *divine*. It is indeed difficult to imagine why he should call himself the "Son of God," a name not before familiar^o in o See note II. Scripture, or an *expected*^p title of the Messiah, rather p See Serm. III. note L. than the "Son of David," by which the "Hope of Israel" was looked for; unless to excite attention, and pave the way for a new and important doctrine,

¹ Christ alludes to God as his "Father," by this title alone, 44 times in St Matthew's, and St John's gospels. See also Luke ii. 49, where some *peculiar* relation is evidently hinted at.

^q See Serm. III. John ii. 25. couched under it. It gave offence^q, as he who “knew what was in man” must have foreseen; and raised an obstacle to his reception as the Messiah. There must then have been a weighty motive for his persevering adoption of it.

Further. In his parable of the householder, who sent his servants to reckon with his husbandmen, the marked distinction which he makes between them and the “last messenger,” “his *Son*”—“his *one Son*”—“his well-beloved”—whom, on this ground, he expected those to “reverence” who had maltreated his *servants*, but whom they “killed as the *heir*,” proves, that he intended to ascribe to himself, by this title, not a relation of mere *office* (which would have made him a *servant*, like the prophets), but one of *nature*. The same difference is enforced by the Apostle, between his master and the most eminent of God’s *human* ambassadors. He extols the fidelity of Moses “in all his house,” (the people committed to his guidance), “as a servant¹,” but that of Christ, “as a *Son*, over *his own* house”—the creatures of his proper hand. And, in pursuance of this distinction, the sin is held up as more flagrant, of disobeying him: “He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy: of how much sorer punishment shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the *Son of*

Matt. xxi.
33—38.
Mark xii. 6.

Heb. iii. 5, 6.
Comp. i. 1,
2.

Heb. x. 28,
29.

¹ Bishop Burnet justly observes, that this comparison must have sounded very harsh to the ears of the Jews, as exalting Christ to another order and rank than Moses. (Article II.) The Apostle then, must have been strongly impressed with the *greatness* of the distinction, and the *importance* of it. He would not *lightly* and *needlessly* shock the feelings of his countrymen, whether already disciples, or such as he wished to convert.

God?" Had *both* been deputed instruments, with whatever inequality of office, they would have had a like relation to their respective disciples, and still more to their common master. For what creature is not the servant of him, of whom angels are "ministers that do his pleasure?" Yet Christ on no occasion acknowledges himself a *servant* of God, or speaks of him as his *Lord*, or in any phrase implying inferiority of *nature*, but only of *order*^r; as a *Son* is subordinate to *Father*, though in all things *like* unto him. The notion of his mere manhood is again pointedly excluded by the contrast of the Apostle: "The law maketh *men* high-priests; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh *the Son*." Unless, also, a communion in all the perfections of the Father be supposed, there can be no propriety in the Apostle's tribute to Christ's humility, in that, *though he were a son*, yet learned he obedience:" for in no lower condition had submission been a grace, but only a duty. Nor is the proof, urged by Christ himself, of God's surpassing goodness to man, of any force, unless on the same ground: "God *so* loved the world that he gave his *only-begotten Son*, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish." The depth of the divine sympathy is inferred from the exalted^s rank of him, whom he permitted to humble himself to be its instrument. The mercy of God, like the faith of Abraham, was signalized by his "not withholding his Son, his *only Son*:" the *identity of relation* made the fitness of this eminent type. Of like force and emphasis is the argument of St Paul: "He that spared not his *own Son*, how shall he not

Ps. ciii. 21.
Comp. Rev.
xxii. 9.

^r See note
L. Sermon. iv.

Heb. vii. 28.

Heb. v. 8.

John iii. 16.
Comp. 1 Joh.
iii. 16; iv.
9, 10.
Rom. v. 8.

^s See note I.

Gen. xxii. 12.

Rom. viii.
32; comp.
34.

with him also freely give us all things?" Had he been no more than a man, dying for others, the example would not have supported the sweeping conclusion grounded on it.

Thus it is clearly seen, that Christ is held up for the "Son of God," in a sense which cannot belong to a man. His like superiority to all the *host of heaven*, is made equally manifest. Not only are the angels expressly included among the creatures of *his* hand, and, as such, called upon to "worship him:" but his "new and better covenant" is proclaimed as more awful in its sanctions than "the word spoken by angels," because of the more excellent *nature* of "the Lord," its author. And the kind and *degree* of this superiority are forcibly exhibited by the same apostle, in those remarkable words, which should alone suffice to set the truth before us; "Unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my *Son*?"

It follows from all this language, that the character of "Son of God," not being ascribed to Christ as representing merely a human, or ministerial, or angelic relation; belonging to him neither by creation, nor adoption, nor by mere virtue of any mission or office, but, as the apostle expresseth it, "*by inherit-*

Col. i. 16.
Heb. i. 6.

Heb. viii. 8,
13.

Heb. ii. 2, 3.

Heb. i. 5.

See Bull J.¹
F. C. c. v.

Heb. i. 4.

¹ See Bull, D. F. N. Sect. I. c. i. n. 10, 11. Allix, 277—283.

² The Apostle in this chapter, refers to *four* passages in the Old Testament, in proof of Christ's superiority to angels, (v. 5, 6, 8 and 10). But, in order to avail to this end, they must, in his view, have been originally intended of Christ, and in a sense which exalts his nature above that of angels; for otherwise they prove nothing. And so taken, they are inconsistent with any other interpretation, than that which we put upon them. (See Stillingfleet's "Discourse on the Trinity," beginning of ch. viii. Also Bp. Burnett, Art. ii.)

ance," i.e. after the manner of a true filial participation, must be intended to designate a strict derivation of *his Father's nature*; that he is "God, Nic. Creed. of God;" or in the words of the same apostle: "The Heb. i. 3. brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person³;" "the image of the invisible God." Col. i. 15.

Christ then is called the Son of God in *no* mere figurative sense, but because, after the plain assertion of St John, "He was in the beginning with God, John i. 1. and *was God*." This disciple, the "beloved" of his John xiii. 23. master, and so not *less* intimate than others in his counsels, or less enlightened by his spirit, was, after his *forewarned* purpose, preserved to a great age John xxi. 22. from the martyrdom which befel his brethren; doubtless that, as the last⁴ oracle of revealed knowledge, he might rebuke early errors, and complete the canon^t of divine truth. t See note K. Thus he wrote at a period, when converts had begun to graft relics of their imperfectly discarded superstitions on their new creed, and heresies had arisen touching the *nature of Christ*. Under these circumstances, the aim of the Evangelist was, to hold up explicitly the right faith on this cardinal doctrine, so as to put down all gainsayers, and instruct the ignorant throughout all ages. And what is the tenor of his lesson? His gospel opens with a clear and authoritative assertion of the existence, before

³ Waterland would render "substance," instead of "person." (Vol. II. p. 92.) In the First Def. of Qu. 11. (vol. I. p. 15) he shews that the Fathers laid great stress on this text.

⁴ Lardner gives the different opinions, both of ancients and moderns, as to the date of St John's Gospel, and the reason which induced him at length to fix upon A.D. 63. ("Hist. of the Apost. and Evang." Works, vol. VI. p. 191.) Others, and among these Mr Locke, would bring it down nearly thirty years later. (vol. VI. 101.)

John i. 1—
14.

all worlds, of a *second divine Person* in the *one Godhead*—the Creator of all things; and of his *true incarnation in Jesus Christ*.

The Old Testament had laid the foundation for the knowledge of this sacred Being; and traces of opinions in agreement therewith, among the early Jews, are to be found in the apocryphal writings, and in the ancient paraphrases of the scriptures^u. And further and successive *traditional* interpretations of them were known to a few of the more learned, in our Saviour's time. This knowledge had never perhaps been universal, or very clearly defined. But, at all times, some, who reflected deeply, or searched anxiously into the true, spiritual meaning of scriptural language, gathered from it some belief in the existence of a *second* being in the divine nature; regarded and revered him, as the channel of all past communications with man, under the title of the "Logos," or "Word¹;" and had learned to expect his future advent, in the *character of the Messiah*. Long before his coming indeed, this ancient creed had been almost

Bull. D. F.
N. sect. III.
c. ii. n. 2.
Waterl. 1st
and 2nd Def.
of Qu. III.
and vol. ii.
135—140.

¹ It should be remembered, that all the divine titles, in the Old Testament, have some *meaning*. They either express some attribute of God, his self-existence, eternity, &c., or some relation of his to man, as of creation, dominion, &c. Such significance was necessary, in order to make them instructive to man, and productive of suitable sentiments. Since then, all the attributes of the Godhead are common to the three persons of the blessed Trinity, and so the names indicative of them are indiscriminately applied, as we have seen; if the *second* person was to be distinguished from the *first*, it was only in consistency with the previous method of the divine dealing, to represent him under a title, expressive of what was *peculiar*, either in his manner of subsistence, as "the Son," or in his relation to man: and as being the channel of the divine communications, we can understand the appropriateness of that selected, "the Logos," or "Word." By such title he was known to the ancient Jews, as has just been shewn. (see note L.)

lost, especially as regarded the last point in it; so that the Messiah of later hope was, to the most part at least of the Jews, a mere *human* deliverer from national oppression, and a triumphant restorer of the lost glory of the kingdom of David. But after the death of Christ, the rapid growth of the religion, and the confident appeals of its first preachers, after his example, to the writings of the Old Testament, as bearing witness, on all points, to his pretensions, had doubtless caused a strict research into the former interpretations of it; and thus the belief of their fathers had become known to many. Hence the language of St John was purposely and wisely adapted to it, as being the most intelligible², and the least

² The very circumstance of St John's introducing such matter without preface or explanation, shews his knowledge that it was not new, or of doubtful purport, to those whom he addressed. He must have been well assured, that the title of "the Word" was familiar to them, as designating a divine being, known from scripture to have pre-existed from eternity, and to have created the world. Though St John was about to reconcile the doctrine of Christ's deity with the unity of God, as taught in the Old Testament, by informing them that it was this sacred being, acknowledged as God in the Old Testament, who had assumed to himself a human nature, in *Jesus Christ*; yet he could not as yet say, that *Christ* had been "in the beginning with God;" because *Christ* was the name of *God incarnate*—of "the Word" *after* he "was made flesh" and so included his human nature: and it would not have been true to assert, that *Christ* was "in the beginning with God." There was no accurate mode of enunciating this truth, but that which the evangelist adopted; of referring to the pre-existence of the second person in the Trinity, by the title under which his pre-existence had been previously taught and acknowledged.

After the incarnation acknowledged, "Son of God," or "Son of Man," "the Word," or "Christ," could indifferently be employed of him, who was all these. Accordingly, in the book of Revelation, St John speaks again of Jesus Christ, as "*the Word*." Rev. xix. 13.

St John is thought not to be the only one, or even the first of the sacred writers of the New Testament who used this term. Heb. xi. 3; 2 Pet. iii. 5; Heb. iv. 12. (comp. Rev. xix. 13, 15; i. 16; ii. 23.)

1 Pet.

^x See note
M.

offensive, in which to *present anew*^x this doctrine to his countrymen, however it may sound, at first, to *our* ear. Its meaning could not by them be misunderstood, or its truth be reasonably disputed. When he wrote, “In the beginning was *the Word*¹,” he set before them, by this name, an eternal being, acknowledged by their scriptures, and, through them, by the faithful of old times. When he proceeded, “the Word was *with* God²” he revived the further opinion of their ancestors, that he was not the Father himself, but a person distinct from the Father; and when he added, “the word *was* God,” he *re-minded*, rather than altogether *informed* them, that this sacred Being possessed from everlasting the full nature, attributes, and perfections, intended by this hallowed name, as they well understood it; in confirmation whereof he applied to him the divine characteristics of “Life” and “Light^z,” and ascribed to him the creation of the world, the unquestionable and exclusive work of the “Lord God of Israel:”

John i. 4.
Comp. Psal.
xxvii. 1;
xxxvi. 9.
^z See Ward-
law, note
G. Dr Gill,
ch. v. Allix,
252—5.

Tillotson,
Serm. i. on
John i. 14.

1 Pet. i. 23; Luke i. 2; Acts xx. 32. are thought to be allusions to the same divine being. See Bp. Burgess, Tracts, 158. Dr S. Clarke, Serm. on 1 Cor. xi. 4—6. (vol. vi. p. 115.) Dr Gill, ch. v. Allix, ch. xxii.

Irenæus, the disciple of Polycarp, who was the disciple and friend of St John, “frequently (says Dr S. Clarke, Script. Doctr. Part II. Sect. 17, note) styles “*the Son*,” the *eternal Word of God*, and affirms that he is *always present with the Father*, and did *always co-exist with the Father*. This may almost be regarded as St John’s own commentary on his own words.

¹ ἐν ἀρχῇ—the same as ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς—“*from the beginning*”—from everlasting. (See Tillotson, Serm. i. on John i. 14.)

² “With God,” i. e. with “the Father.” Comp. 1 John i. 2. See Pearson, p. 50. Waterland, vol. II. p. 7. Tillotson, Serm. i. on John i. 14. Stillingfleet, Disc. on the Trin. ch. viii. Dr S. Clarke, Script. Doctr. No. 535.

“All things were made by him, and without him John i. 4. was not made any thing that was made.” In nothing herein did the Evangelist more than develop the doctrine of the Old Testament, or the consistent, though imperfect creed of their forefathers. And he only expressed in clearer and more confident language, what had been the *ancient* hope, in his further assertion; “the Word was made flesh (took unto himself the perfect nature of man), and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the *only-begotten* of the Father.” Allix, ch. xvi. —xviii. Tillotson, Sermon. iii. on John i. 14.

The Evangelist, in all this language, is carrying out the example and counsel of his divine master. As “a scribe instructed unto the kingdom of heaven”—richly stored with the whole wisdom both of the mosaic and gospel dispensations—he “bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old”—holdeth up the true light of both, and their perfect agreement; thus rendering his lesson at once easy and convincing. The terms in which he thus proclaimed the union of the divine nature with that of man, in the person of him, of whom the Baptist “came John i. 7, 34. for a witness,” and “bare record,” were calculated to satisfy the candid and enquiring Jews, that his doctrine was not only not in contradiction to, but was even in *direct fulfilment* of the real sense of their scriptures; and consequently not at variance with the unity of God, as intended therein. Nor was this language ill suited to convey and recommend the truth to the *heathen*. For some knowledge of the Jewish scriptures, and of the doctrines grounded upon them, had been allowed to transpire, some ages

Matt. xiii. 52.

before; and had been made the basis of those speculations of the pagan philosophers, touching the nature of the great first cause, which came the nearest to truth. Thus by the wisdom of a far-seeing and all-controuling providence, a way had been opened^a for the readier and wider circulation of his long meditated revelation, by the "Word" himself.

^a See note N.

The true purport of this language of St John cannot be overlooked by those who candidly weigh the main scope of his Gospel, of which it forms the introduction, and with which, therefore, it must be intended to tally. The earlier Evangelists having^b given a general history of their master's life and doctrines, it was the chief object of this crowning work, to set forth more distinctly and fully than had been suitable, or even *prudent*^c, at first, the mystery of his divine nature. The evidence of it, as of all truth, was to be mainly sought in his own discourses. And this Gospel is, accordingly, much taken up with the record of such of them as bear upon his divine pre-existence in heaven, and his "coming down thence to give life unto the world." Hence it derives its peculiar character. The very frequency and variety of such allusions, proves their lofty and important meaning. For as intimations of a mere heavenly *mission*, they could not now be needed; inasmuch as he had been amply proved, and widely acknowledged, on other evidence, to be a "Teacher come from God," and "the Prophet that should come into the world." The whole tone and manner of Christ, throughout his ministry on earth, bespoke some great truth in *reserve*, which he saw reason

^b See note K.

^c See beg. of Serm. II. 111.

John vi. 33.

not to develop plainly and fully at once, but only to prepare the way for. This truth—his pre-existence in the full nature of the one God, and his incarnation as the promised Messiah—is the one pervading theme of St John's Gospel. And the introduction would naturally be in accordance with it. Nor need we put any force upon the language of the Evangelist, to bring it to such agreement. In its *common, obvious* sense, such as would immediately occur to those to whom it was originally addressed, it forms a solid and suitable ground-work for the lofty superstructure raised upon it. It proclaims, on the authority of an *ancient* and *acknowledged* revelation, the existence of a second divine Being, answering to the lessons of the new; who had been promised, and of old expected agreeably to such promise, in the very character assumed by Christ. Such is at once the clear and consistent doctrine of the opening chapter of St John's Gospel.^d

^dSee note O.

It will be sufficient to select a portion of the consentient evidence which follows in it. The doctrine of his divine nature was, during his personal ministry, one full of danger^e, if preached undisguisedly; as will be shewn more fully hereafter. Hence we find Christ opening it by *insinuation*,¹ rather than by plain

^e See note G, and beg. of Sermon II.
III.

¹ It is perhaps scarcely necessary to point out, that the beginning of St John's Gospel, being in the words of the Evangelist himself, is of later origin (though in position earlier) than the discourses following, of his master; and were *intended to be*, and *are*, a key by which the better to interpret these. The necessity for caution, which imposed a restraint on our Lord, had now, in a great measure, ceased. And it is a strong argument of the strict fidelity and candour of St John, that he does not make Christ's own language more plain, to

assertion, to the minds of his enemies, and even of his disciples, who laboured under the same prejudices. One intimation of it, which the former eagerly seized upon as evidently manifesting his “blasphemous” pretension (as they regarded it), is that which he introduces with so much solemnity, as

John viii. 58.
 † See Serm.
 II. note I.

if announcing a new and important truth; “*Verily*[†], *verily*, I say unto you, before Abraham was, *I am*.”

Not only was he perceived to teach herein his existence *without beginning*; but the last words were an intelligible application to himself of the hallowed

Exod. iii. 14.

title of “the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob.”

He was well understood. They waited for no further proof of his guilt, but would have at once inflicted upon him the sentence of their law against those who preach a “strange God;” had he not, in the power of God, withdrawn himself invisibly from among them. On many¹ other occasions, and by various allusions, he taught his descent from heaven, and, by consequence, his pre-existence there. To satisfy his disciples, who were far from being prepared to receive this doctrine, that he intended by such language its simple purport, he more than

suit his own more open avowal of the truth. It shews how scrupulously he adhered to an exact record of Christ’s very words; and also that he considered them to contain a sufficiently explicit testimony to the doctrine of his full divinity. *We* see clearly enough our Saviour’s real meaning, and what St John would have us understand it to be.

¹ Some will be referred to. Among those omitted are, John iii. 13; vi. 33, 50, 51, 58; viii. 14, 23, 29, 38, 42; xii. 41; xiii. 3; xvi. 27.

These are from St John only. Comp. Heb. x. v. referring to Ps. xl. 6 (as to which, see Pearson, p. 157); also Rom. viii. 3; and, generally, all passages in which Christ is spoken of as “*sent*” into the world, not *born*: as 1 John iv. 9, 10.

once appealed to his approaching *return to Heaven* ;
 “ I came forth *from the Father*, and am come into John xvi. 28.
 the world : again, I leave the world, and *go to the* John vi. 62.
Father ;” promising it even in their view : “ What
 and if ye shall *see* the Son² of Man ascend up where
 he *was before* ?” And then they understood him ;
 convinced, that as he obviously spake of a return
 thither, in a literal sense, his previous descent, thus
 coupled with it, could not be intended in the way of
 figure : “ They said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou
plainly, and speakest no *proverb*³ : by this we believe
 that thou *camest forth from God*.” The words which
 he addressed to the Father, are of like force ; and
 suitable only to one referring to a past condition of
 living majesty with him, which he had for awhile
 quitted for a special end, and which he was about
 to resume : “ Father, I have glorified thee on earth ; John xvii.
 I have finished the work which thou gavest me to 4, 5.
 do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine
 own self, with the glory which *I had with thee before*
the world was.” The glory to which he looked

² He could only be *seen* to ascend in *our* substance, as man ; and he therefore calls himself the “ Son of Man,” though it was as the “ Son of God,” that he “ *was before*” in heaven. As he now united both natures, he could properly speak of himself by either title, accordingly as it was suited to the immediate subject of his discourse.

³ “ Proverb,” i. e. figure, metaphor. Such is the common meaning of this term. See Numb. xxi. 27, and Dodd’s Bible. Locke explains it by “ *obscure, enigmatical, figurative,*” (vol. vi. 95.)

There were, in the answer of the Apostles on this occasion, two distinct acknowledgments of our Lord’s divine character ; one, of his *omniscience*, “ Now are we sure that thou knowest all things ;” and another, of his *pre-existence* ; “ Now we believe that thou *camest forth from God*.” And instead of disclaiming what they ascribed to him, he acquiesced : “ Do ye now believe ?” See Tillotson, Sermon. II. on John i. 14.

forward was real, and in personal communion with the Father. The glory then with which he pronounced it *identical*, and which he had laid aside, must have been real, and in his presence. These words are a plain testimony¹ to the meaning and truth of St John's opening doctrine, that "He was in the beginning with God, and was God." Of like effect is Christ's declaration, that "the Father loved him before the foundation of the world." He must have had a real being (when no creature existed), to be the object of this divine affection; an affection, therefore, solely grounded on their *mutual* relation.

John i. 1.

John xvii.
24.

^fSee Water-
land, vol. v.
ch. viii.

^gSee note L.
and Allix,
ch. xvi. xvii.

^hSee Serm.
iii. note L.

Heb. i. 1—10.

The apostle Paul opens his Epistle to the Hebrews with matter of like tenor with that of St John, in the commencement of his gospel^f; and also grounded (without explanation, as addressing those now conversant with the truth) on ancient and approved interpretations of *the Old Testament*. To him who was known to their fathers as the "^gWord of God," it had been understood by them of old, that the character of "Son of God" also belonged. By this title, therefore, now ^hfamiliarized to all by the preaching of the gospel, St Paul reminds them of his pre-existence, as "the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person." And he illustrates and confirms his doctrine, after the manner of St John, by ascribing to him, on scriptural authority, the creation of "the worlds,"—that he had "laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens were the work of his hands;" and to him moreover

¹ So says Dr Samuel Clarke (Script. Doctr. No. 607.)

the perpetual sustentation of all nature,—that he “upholdeth all things by the word of his power.” Heb. i. 3. Having thus shewn, in his original and divine nature, the grounds on which “all the angels of God worshipped him,” the apostle teaches his incarnation, and the motive of it; that he “was made a little Heb. ii. 9. Comp. John iii. 14—17. lower than the angels for the suffering of death,” that “by the grace of God he should taste death for every man.” That he might “by himself purge our sins,” need was that he should bear their allotted penalty; and hence that he should assume the very nature of the transgressors: “Forasmuch as the Heb. ii. 14. Comp. John i. 14. *children* are partakers of flesh and blood, he also *took part of the same*, that *through death* he might destroy him that had the power of death.” In allusion to this, his condescension to stoop to our nature, it is further written: “He that sanctifieth, and they Heb. ii. 11. that are sanctified, being (thus made) all of one (stock); for this cause he is not *ashamed* to call them *brethren*,” an imputation of humility for which there could have been no ground, had he not possessed other nature than that in which “he was made like Heb. ii. 17. Comp. Gal. iv. 4, 5. unto them.” The reasoning, and the manner of expression throughout, imply, not an original birth in the single nature of man, and a subsequent undertaking to bear the iniquity of his fellows; but a deliberate *pre-meditation*, in one able to weigh the necessary method and effects of the required remedy, and a willing *transition* into a *secondary* state of existence, in which alone that remedy could be found. Moreover, had the Redeemer been *merely* a man, it might well have been thought needful by the apostle

to inform us, from what motive God saw good to accept the trivial merit and sufferings of *one*, as the ransom for *all*; but there could have been no necessity for this elaborate assurance that he *was a man*, which he was seen and known to be. It was only because the apostle had first shewn him to be *truly God*, that he foresaw, or perhaps had already *experienced*¹, a perplexity to the minds of some, in the doctrine, that he had humbled himself to be “found in fashion as a man.” With this difficulty the *Evangelist*, at any rate, lived to contend. Before the years of the venerable St John were brought to a close, he was called upon to rebuke the early heresy of those who, unable to digest the doctrine of *God incarnate*, chose either to divide the *divine* nature from the *human*, in our blessed Saviour; or else to suppose his susception of the human, to be nothing more than a *phantasm* or *shew*¹.

Phil. ii. 8.

¹See note P.

There is much of consentient testimony to the doctrine of Christ's pre-existence in the glory of the divine nature, in other portions of the New Testament. It makes at once the assertion and the argument of the apostle Paul, in his exhortation to the Philippians, to exhibit a self-denying spirit. He sets before them the Saviour, as a model of unex-

Phil. ii. 5—7.

¹ It is supposed by some that not only St Paul, but St Peter, had occasion to rebuke the opinions entertained by Cerinthus. Ittigius de Hæres. ævi Apostol. &c. Sect. i. c. v. Waterland, vol. ii. 158.

bery to be *equal with God*, but *made² himself* of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant³, and was made in the likeness of men." It is the clear drift of this language, that Christ had, previously to his incarnation, lived in a state of glory, which he quitted; had stood on a pinnacle, from which he stooped; had been clothed in a majesty, of which he disrobed himself. His self-humiliation consisted in shrouding his original brightness under the lowly garb which he assumed, when "manifested to take away our sins." What he had¹ John iii. 5. been, is contrasted with the condition to which he consented to abase himself, in putting on "the likeness of men." What was he then before? The apostle has furnished the answer: "In the form of^{Phil. ii. 6.} God;" an expression necessarily of corresponding force with those to which it is opposed, "the form of a servant," "in fashion as a man;" and so, not less clearly intimating the true nature of God, than these denote the reality of "sinful flesh." But as if to prevent all doubt, it is said: "He thought it not robbery to be equal with God;" a phrase which, whatever be the precise force of the word rendered into our language by "robbery^k," cannot properly be^k See note Q.

² *ἐαυτὸν ἐκένωσε*—literally, "emptied himself," which expresses the sense of laying aside a previous glory, more clearly. See Bull. J. E. C. c. i. n. 6; and Wall's "Infant Baptism," II. 344, who quote the paraphrase of Origen: "novissimis temporibus seipsum exinaniens, homo factus est; incarnatus est, cum *Deus esset*; et homo factus, mansit quod *Deus erat*."

³ "Form of a servant," i. e. of a *creature*, every creature being the servant of his Creator (Bull. D. F. N. Sect. II. c. ii. n. 2.) For the general scope of this passage see his "Pr. et Ap. Tr." c. vi. n. 21, and Dr J. Knight, ch. ii. No. 934. Also the references in note Q.

construed to imply less than an inherent participation in the fulness of the divine glory.

Such is the apostle's *assertion*. And in this sense alone can it furnish the *argument* following, of Christ's wondrous self-denial. It consisted in brooking, though God, the troubles and indignities which "flesh is heir to." As *man*, he had descended from no high estate; he lived in that in which he was born. Could it be merely intended, as Socinians¹ wrest this language to their views, that as a *human* messenger of God, endued by him with supernatural powers (and in this sense only, "in the form of God," and "equal to God"), he devoted them not to his own aggrandizement, but to the service of man (the end for which he received them, and for which alone, remaining subject to the divine Giver, he would exercise them), and for man laid them down with his life, "humbling himself, and becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross"? were this all his merit—such commission and such credentials had all the apostles and first teachers; so, too, they lived; and so they, for the most part, died. They wrought, as he had foretold, greater miracles; they bore, as he had foretold, greater hardships: "were patiently in afflictions, in necessities, in stripes, in imprisonments." Like God's servants of old, they "were stoned, were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain." Yet not for *their* willing humiliation, in contrast with their divine mission and gifts, did "God give them a name which is above every name^m." It is never pronounced of their dignity and their condescension, that, being

¹ See note R.

John xiv. 12.
Acts v. 15,
16; viii. 17;
xix. 12.
Matt. x. 25;
xx. 23; xxiii.
34; John xxi.
18; comp. 2
Cor. xi. 23—
28; vi. 4, 5.
Acts vii. 58.
Heb. xi. 37.

Phil. ii. 9.

^m See note S.

in the form of God, "they took other and degrading shape, and made themselves of no reputation." It is never proclaimed of the charity they exhibited towards man, as of the "love of Christ," that it "pass- Eph. iii. 19.
eth knowledge." A broad distinction is ever preserved between the apostolic martyrs and their great example, not grounded on a disparity of bodily trials, but of *the natures* in which they respectively submitted to them. In their aim, their labours, and their fate, they bear comparison with their Master; and hence are dignified with the name of "fellow- 2 Cor. vi. 1.
workers with Christ." Yet it is never made an argument of God's unbounded mercy, that he permitted *them* to die in the service of men; as it is, that he "spared not his *own Son*, but delivered Rom.viii.32.
him up for us all." There is no approach, in any language employed of them, to expressions which make them to have lived in former, much less in *original* glory; which bring them from heaven as its ancient scene. It is not said of Paul, the most eminent among them for his divine endowments, and his voluntary labours and sufferings, for other's good; "Ye know his grace, that though he was rich, 2 Cor. viii. 9.
yet for your sakes he became poor¹, that ye through his poverty might be rich." Such language could be applicable to him alone, who laid aside for a while his proper happiness, that he might bring us to par- 1 John iii. 2.
take of it; to him alone, who "came down from John vi. 38.
heaven," and who, agreeably to his promise, and in John vi. 62.

¹ This is evidently a parallel to Phil. ii. 6, 7. See note R, and Ward-law, as there referred to.

Luke xxiv. 51. testimony to his true descent, "while he blessed his disciples, was parted from them, and carried up into heaven;" "while they beheld, was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight."

Acts i. 9. To the Baptist, the pre-existence of Christ had been no secret; and his knowledge of it came from other sources. He, like him of whom he bare witness, had a *mission* from God; was *born* out of the course of nature; had been foretold by *prophecy*; was

Luke i. 36.

Matt. iii. 3.

Luke i. 13.
 announced at his conception by an *angel*; was

Luke i. 15.
 "filled with the *Holy Ghost*, even from his mother's

Matt. xi. 9.
 womb:" it was testified of him, that he "was a prophet, yea, and more than a prophet." So, in every *figurative* sense, he, too, "*came forth from God.*" Hence, when he assigns as a reason of

John iii. 31.
 Christ's superiority to him, "He cometh from above;" "He that is from heaven is above all;" he must needs intend a *literal* descent; for otherwise his words set forth no ground of distinction from himself. He leads us elsewhere to the same conclusion, asserting that Christ *existed before him*, though born into the world after him, and entering later upon his ministry; and that, on the ground of this pre-existence, he was his superior: "He that *cometh* after me is preferred before me: for he *was before me.*" On this account it is, that he, of whom Christ testified, "Among them that are *born of women* there hath not risen a greater than John," himself pronounceth of Christ, "whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose." Surely, too, it was of some pre-eminence other than that of prophet over prophet, that he gave preternatural acknowledgment, even

“in his mother’s womb;” “leaping for joy” at the honour done unto her that bare him, “that the mother of *her Lord* should come unto her.” Accordingly, to the Baptist, instructed by the Holy Ghost dwelling in him, as to the *nature* of Christ, and as to his *person*, by the outward symbol of the same divine witness descending and remaining upon him, doth Christ appeal for testimony of himself. And his testimony is, “I saw, and bare record that this is the *Son of God*.”

That the nature which he, whom “angels worshipped,” received, when he “was made a little lower than the angels,” was not his original and proper nature, is further shewn, by the care with which both St Peter and St Paul inform us, that “he was made of the seed of David *according to the flesh*,” but according to the *spirit of holiness* (his holy spiritual nature) was “declared to be the Son of God.” This emphatic limitation of his descent from David to one element only of his mixed being, is taught again by the latter apostle, in nearly the same terms; when also he makes it the glory of his nation, that the Redeemer should receive his human nature of their seed—“whose are the fathers, and of whom, *as concerning the flesh*, Christ came.” And he straightway explains the meaning of this restriction, and the ground of his boast, by alleging his previous glory: “Who is over all, °God blessed for ever!” This truth, of Christ’s two-fold nature, is otherwise made known, through a striking figure, by St John; who proclaims him for both “the *root* and *offspring* of David,” i. e. as at once his *Creator*, and his *Son*. And it seems

Luke i. 41, 44.

John i. 32, 33.

John v. 32, 33.

John i. 34.

Heb. i. 6.

Heb. ii. 9.

Acts ii. 30.
Rom. i. 3—6.

ⁿ See note T.

Rom. ix. 5.

^o See Sermon 11. note T.

Rev. ii. 16.

to have been notified under a somewhat similar metaphor in the Old Testament, wherein the Messiah is foretold both as “a *branch* of Jehovah,” and as a
Isai. iv. 2. “*branch* of David;” i. e. as having, in his complex
Jer. xxiii. 5. person, a community of substance with each parent stem. To such inference he would evidently himself lead, in his question so perplexing to those, who, overlooking the true sense of Scripture, expected a mere *human* Messiah: “If David call him Lord, how is he his Son?” his son, *only*? for he meant not to disavow his parentage in *one* sense; but only to imply, that he possessed, at the same time, another and loftier.

Thus manifold is the witness to the divine nature and pre-existence, and to the true incarnation, of the Son of God. In all this language, we have a certain and convincing testimony to the fulfilment of the ancient promises, of one ^pfitted to be a mediator, by partaking in *both* the natures to be reconciled: “a
p See note V. *child born*,” and “a *son given*”—“a *man* of sorrows,”
Isai. ix. 6; lili. 3. and “the mighty *God*”: who was proclaimed, in the moment which introduced this mysterious combination to the world, in language apposite: “a Saviour, which is *Christ, Jehovah!*”
Luke ii. 11. See Allix, and Pearson, 187.

SERMON II.

MATTH. XXVIII. 19.

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

“IF the doctrines of a blessed Trinity, and of the promised Messiah being very God, had been altogether unknown to the Jews before Christ began to preach the gospel, it would be a great prejudice against the Christian religion. But the contrary being once satisfactorily made out, will go a great way towards proving these doctrines among Christians.” Such is the just conclusion of one, whose Allix, ch. i. learning has thrown a great light upon the opinions of the Jews of ancient times, and fully established the existence among them of such a degree of knowledge on these articles of our creed, as furnishes a valuable confirmation of their truth. Their knowledge was grounded upon the imperfect revelations of the Old Testament. It was my endeavour, in my last discourse, to collect its scattered rays, and to shew their sufficiency, as a foundation for that partial and preparatory faith, for which alone *prophetical* notices were intended, and which the Jews of old actually built upon them. Having first adduced from this source a variety of passages which imply a plurality, and that a *Trinity*, of persons, in the one Godhead, I proceeded to lay before you such texts, as bear a

separate testimony to the divinity of the promised Messiah, leaving the like witness to the nature of the Holy Spirit, for future consideration. And after a statement of the evidence of the Old Testament on this point, I entered upon that of the New. I showed, by many proofs, that Christ taught himself to be the "*Son of God*," in a sense which cannot belong to man, or angel, or *created* being, of *any* rank; but only to one, subsisting in the true and perfect nature of God.

The offensiveness of this pretension in the sight of the Jewish rulers, (who, ignorant, for the most part, of the views of their forefathers, looked upon it as an infringement of the divine unity), and the consequent certainty of their violence, should he explicitly assert it; led Christ, during almost his whole public ministry, and for a while with his select disciples, who had been educated in the same prejudice, to unfold the truth rather through inferences to be drawn from his language, than plainly and openly. Thus, though his real meaning was suspected, and often evident, even to his enemies, no sufficient handle was afforded for his legal condemnation as a blasphemer against the Majesty of God; until, at length, in the fullness of time, when the ends of his sojourn on earth were accomplished, he plainly confessed his divine origin; and on this account was, as he had foreseen, put to death, in that nature which alone could die.

John xvii. 4,
5.
Luke xxii.
70, 71.
See Sermon. III.

It was the first duty of the Evangelists to hand down the very words of their Master, that our faith might stand in him, and not in man. Hence we find

this doctrine presented by them, for the most part, in his own guarded language. And there was to them, for a time, some necessity for a like wariness in the method and *order* of teaching; for establishing the truth of his *mission*, before unfolding that of his *nature*. But, at suitable seasons, they boldly declare, in their own persons and speech, the belief which they derived from his instruction, confirmed to them by that Holy Spirit, which “brought all things to their remembrance,” and “taught them all things,” and “guided them into all truth.” St John, in the very opening of his gospel, proclaims, in set terms, as the very fundamental article of necessary faith, that in Christ was incarnate that Divine Being, who was “in the beginning with the Father;” who, “before the heavens and the earth were made, *was God* from everlasting;” of which, moreover, in proof of this truth, he attributes to him the creation. The Apostle Paul commences his Epistle to the Hebrews with language of like purport and explicitness^a. I referred to this testimony of both, as well as to numerous passages in their writings, and to some in other parts of the New Testament, in which the pre-existence of Christ in heaven, an irrefragable argument of his divinity, is either asserted, or plainly implied; as also his true incarnation, and two-fold nature. I now proceed to other evidence.

We have already seen that divine *Titles*¹ are

See Wilson,
p. 45.

John xiv. 26.

John xvi. 13.

John i. 1—18.
Comp. 1 John
i. 1, 2.

John i. 3.

^a See note
A.

Serm. i. p.
14—17.

¹ For a proof of Christ's divinity from the divine *titles* applied to him, see Waterland, vol. II. Serm. vi.; and from the divine *Attributes*, Serm. vii. Also Whitby's Tract. sect. i. and Dr Gill, ch. vi. for all these heads. Also Potter, sect. iv.

ascribed in Scripture to the Messiah, shewing him, by this direct testimony, to be God. And other instances will be referred to, towards the close of this discourse. But the Supreme Being is made known to us by other signs; by a reference to his *attributes*, and to his *works*, and by the suitable and exclusive *worship* which he commands for himself, on these grounds. *Each of these tokens* is appropriated also to *Christ*. Thus we know in him the nature of God, by *all the same tests* as in the Father; and hence, necessarily, in the *same sense*. No mark is left by which to distinguish *the Creator* from a *creature*, if Christ be *less than God*. It shall be the aim of my present discourse to exhibit proofs of these assertions, first, in the testimony of the inspired writers, speaking in *their own persons*; afterwards, in the parallel declarations of their divine Master, upon which their belief was founded.

First, as to the *Attributes* of God.

Christ is held up as ETERNAL. It had been declared by the prophet Micah^b, in a passage which it is manifest the Jews understood, generally, to belong to him who was to come as their Messiah; "His goings forth have been of old, *from everlasting*." The Psalmist had spoken of him in almost the same terms. In strict accordance with this ancient witness, is that of the Evangelist, already quoted, "*In the beginning*¹ was the Word.....The same was *in the beginning* with God:" a phrase which excludes the notion of a

^b See note B.

Mic. v. 2.
Comp. Luke
ii. 4. and
Matt. ii. 5, 6.
John vii. 42.
Ps. xciii. 2.

John i. 1, 2.

¹ For the proper force of this expression, see Tillotson, Sermon i. on John i. 14.

time when he was not. And as it is taught that he was “without beginning of days,” so also that he shall be “without end of life:” “the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever;” everlasting, and without change, in time past, present, and to come. “They (the heavens and earth) shall perish, but thou remainest:” “Thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.”

OMNIPOTENCE is ascribed to him—a mighty “working, whereby he is able even to subdue *all* things unto himself.” And it is “understood” of him, as of the Father, by “the things that are made;” the creation of all things proving “eternal power and Godhead,” in the one, as in the other. The authority also which his disciples received from him, “to cast out unclean spirits, and to heal all manner of sickness,” bespoke in him an universal dominion. He is described as OMNISCIENT²; for it is said, “In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” “He knew all things;” “knew *in himself*”—not by extrinsic inspiration—not only “what was in man,” but those “secret things which belong unto the Lord:” for it is written of him; “The only-begotten, which is in the bosom of the Father”—in the intimacy of his nature and counsels—“he hath declared him.” His OMNIPRESENCE is made known (as that of the Father)

Heb. vii. 3, 21.

Heb. xiii. 8. Comp. Rev. i. 8. of the Father.

Heb. i. 11, 12.

Phil. iii. 21.

Rom. 1. 20. Comp. John i. 3.

Matt. x. 1.

Col. ii. 3.

John xvi. 30; xxi. 17. Mark v. 30.

John i. 18.

² The manner of expression also in John i. 48; Matt. ix. 4; Mark ii. 5; Luke vii. 39, 40; ix. 47; Acts i. 24; (which Dr S. Clarke allows to be addressed to Christ; Script. Doctr. No. 690.) 1 Cor. iv. 5, implies a belief on the part of the sacred writers that he “knew all things,” in virtue of his own proper nature. It is far different from the language in which any like knowledge is asserted of the apostles; in whom it is expressly attributed to the *Holy Spirit*. It resembles the language which is employed of the Father. Comp. Jer. xvii. 10; 1 Kings viii. 39; Acts xv. 8.

Heb. i. 3.

1 John v.
14.

in the assurance that he “upholdeth all things” which exist, and “heareth” every prayer of all, in all the world. For where he perceives and acts, there he needs must be, in as large a sense as the Father’s presence and providence are thus known.

Ps. c. 3.
Comp. Zech.
xii. 1.
Nehem. ix. 6.
2 Kings xix.
15.
Isai. xlii. 5.
Rev. xiv. 7.
&c. &c.

Gen. i. 26.

As the divine *attributes* are thus shewn to belong to Christ, so also the *operations* which are confessedly divine. The CREATION¹ of all things is justly regarded by the apostle as an unquestionable characteristic of the Godhead, and is frequently appealed to in this light, in the Old Testament. “Know ye that the Lord he is God; it is he that hath *made* us,” is the reasoning of the Psalmist: and it is a conclusion, for which the like premises are acknowledged in his Son. The whole frame of the universe is pointed to, as a monument of his handywork. Moses had been inspired to record, that the Father took counsel therein and co-operation, saying, “Let us make.” Accordingly, the Apostle applies to the future Mes-

¹ For a proof of the divinity of Christ, from his creation of the world, See Waterland, v. ii. serm. II. III., and Whitby’s Tract, c. I. sect. xi. xii. xiii.

The *Socinians* admit the creation of the world to be a work exclusively of God, and, to evade the conclusion that Christ is so, understand the creation *here* spoken of, to mean merely, the *moral renovation* of man, by the preaching of Christ.

The *Arians* admit the creation spoken of to be the same as that in Genesis: but, to avoid the inference that Christ is truly God, suppose the work merely to have been committed to him (though himself a *creature*, in their view), as a *deputed instrument*.

Thus it continually happens, that they who dissent from the plain, natural meaning of scriptural language, are driven to mere fanciful explanations of such portions as do not suit them; and, having no certain ground of interpretation, one allows what the other rejects, and rejects what the other allows. See, as against both, Tillotson, Sermon. I. and II. on John i. 14. Also Whitby’s Tract, c. I. sect. xi. xii. xiii.

siah, as addressed to him *by the Father*, words testifying his concurrence therein; “Thou, Lord², in the beginning, hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thy hands.” With harmonious witness, St John, having once asserted this truth, straightway confirms it by repetition, agreeably to its importance as an illustration of his accompanying doctrine, that “he was in the beginning with God, and was God:” saying, “He was in the world, and the world was *made* by him:” and he adds; “and *the world knew him not.*”

These last words are perhaps important enough, taken in connexion with the context, to merit a particular notice. The purport of this reproach of the Evangelist is, that the creatures of his fashioning hand “knew him not,” in his true character: “his own,” they whom he had “*made*,” when he came with consistent mercy to redeem them, “received him not”—owned not in him *the Lord their Maker*. And the power *so* to “receive him,” and to “believe on his name,” (an expression which of itself implies an object of religious faith), is represented to be “not of the will of the flesh, nor of man;” not by the unaided faculty of the natural reason, “*but of God.*” This declaration is of like force with that of our Lord himself to Peter, upon his confession of him, as “the Christ, the *Son of the living God*.” “*Flesh and blood* hath not revealed it unto thee, but *my Father* which is in heaven.” This difficult knowledge, requiring a special illumi-

Heb. i. 10.
Ps. cii. 25.

John i. 11.
Bull, J. E. C.
c. ii. n. 4.
Tillotson, S.
i. on John i.
14, near the
end. Berri-
man, p. 39.

John i. 12.

John i. 13.

Matt. xvi. 16,
17.

² See Tillotson, Sermon. II. on John i. 14.

nation from above, must, in both instances, refer to his divine *nature*; intimated, in the one, by the character of *Creator*, and in the other, by that of the “*Son of God*” for, as a divine *messenger*—as the *Messiah*—many¹ “received” him by the mere light of the understanding, through their notice of the fulfilment of prophecy, and the evidence of his power and wisdom. Hence when, on such grounds, Nicodemus freely saluted him as a “*teacher come from God*,” Christ told him there were yet other and loftier truths than any yet confessed by him, or even announced to him, which he would find a difficulty in believing; and proceeded to instance, in his “*coming down from heaven*,” and in his being “the *only-begotten Son of God*,” language then, importing far more than his *already acknowledged mission*.

But to return to the evidence of Christ’s divine *operations*. He is not glorified as artificer of this lower world only, and of every living thing that moveth therein, but also of the unseen world of *spirits*, the celestial hierarchy which rejoiceth in the “light of God’s countenance.” Not only is this *implied* in the negative assertion of St John, “Without him was not *anything* made that was made” (purposely added, as it is thought^d, to enforce this particular truth); but it is expressly affirmed by St Paul; “by him were all things created, that are in heaven and in earth, visible and *invisible*,” and by him, not as

¹ As Nathanael, John i. 45; also ii. 11, 23, and all his Apostles; Nicodemus, as here referred to; the woman of Samaria, John iv. 29; five thousand at once, John vi. 14, &c.

a mere deputed instrument, but of his own concurring will: "all things were created *by* him, and *for*^e him." ^cSee note E. Such is the testimony of those whose uniform doctrine Heb. iii. 4; comp. Gen. i. is, that "he who built all things *is God*."

As we are told that Christ was before all things, and created them, so also that he is their PRESERVER; sustaining them by his perpetual providence, and continuing to them their natural energies: "By him ^{Col. i. 17.} all things *consist*," i. e. "live, and move, and have ^{Acts xvii. 28.} their being:" "He *upholdeth* all things by the word ^{Heb. i. 3.} of his power." He it is to whom the future destruction of the heavens and the earth is reserved: "They shall perish:" "as a vesture shalt thou fold them ^{Heb. i. 11, 12.} up, and they shall be changed." He also will renew our nature unto a capacity for the blessedness of heaven; "changing our vile body, that it may be ^{Phil. iii. 21.} fashioned like unto his glorious body." It cannot, surely, be thought, that he who made all things, and exercises over them a present superintendence, and will be the author of whatever changes yet await them in the womb of time, is ought less than God. At his hands, moreover, we are bid to look for *judgment*, the acknowledged prerogative of divine supremacy. "We shall all stand before the judgment-seat of *Christ*; for it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to *God*²." Hence his displeasure is held

Rom. xiv. 10,
11; comp. ²
Tim. iv. 1.

² The names of *Christ* and of *God* are here interchanged in a manner unaccountable, unless as he is God.

The Unitarians admit it to be a thing incredible, that judgment should be committed to a mere man, and know not how to get over this text. This consideration, of itself, they confess, has prevented

Exod. xxiii.
21.

Ps. ii. 12.

Rev. vi. 16,
17.Exod. xxiii.
12.Acts xvii.
25.

up to apprehension in words of ancient inspiration, addressed to man as by the Father himself: "Beware of him, and obey his voice; provoke him not: for he will not pardon your transgressions." After this warning, is the Psalmist's caution: "Kiss¹ the Son"—own his rank and rightful dominion—"lest he be angry: when his wrath is kindled but a little, blessed are all they that put their trust in him." In consistency with these notices, all the inhabitants of the earth are represented by the Evangelist as "hiding themselves from him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the *wrath of the Lamb*; for that the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?" Who must he be, before whose tribunal every man living shall tremble with terror and amazement, in expectation of an unerring scrutiny, and a righteous doom? "The name of God is in him."

Lastly, PRAYER is a homage belonging to God alone, by which confession is made of our dependence on him for "life, and breath, and all things." It is an acknowledgment of his glorious perfections, as exhibited towards man; imputing to him *omni-*

some persons of "learning and reflection" from acceding to their hypothesis. See a quotation from Mr Belsham, in Wardlaw. (Note H.)

The *Socinians*, on the other hand, constantly affirm it to be the clear sense of scripture, that Christ is to preside in the judgment of mankind, while yet they regard him as a *man*. See Toulmin's *Life of Soc.* pp. 200, 305, 456.

The former reject the whole doctrine of scripture on these two points; the latter retain half. We receive the whole.

¹ Bishop Patrick understands by this expression, an act of homage, as to a sovereign. See his notes on Gen. xli. 40, and 1 Sam. x. 1. Allix regards it here as an act of religious worship, and shows that the ancient Jews applied it to the Messiah, p. 232.

presence to hear, and all *wisdom* and *might* to discern, and to relieve our wants. And prayer^f was made to Christ by his apostles, and invited from all, in every age. St John says of him, now glorified: "This is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us; and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him." So St Paul: "The same Lord² over all is rich unto all that call upon him." To him, therefore, did he prefer his private supplication, and was heard: "I besought the Lord thrice, and he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee." Upon others did he invoke blessings, as from the Father, so also from the Lord³ Jesus Christ, the equal source of every good and perfect gift. To him did the apostles present their united prayer for the guidance of the Spirit. To him the faithful Stephen, "full of the Holy Ghost," and instructed by a vision of his glory, committed himself in his dying agony, "calling upon God^g, and saying, *Lord Jesus*, receive my spirit;" that spirit of which it is elsewhere said, that it "shall return unto *God*." To Christ also did he pray for his murderers: "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge;" thus ascribing to him the prerogative of pardon also, the exclusive attribute of Deity. As the proper fruit of these lessons and examples, it

¹ John v. 14, 15.

Rom. x. 12; comp. v. 9, "The Lord Jesus."

² Cor. xii. 8, 9.

¹ Thess. iii. 11, 12; ² Thess. ii. 16; iii. 16. ¹ Cor. i. 3. ² Cor. i. 2.

Acts i. 24.

Acts vii. 55.

^g See note G. Acts vii. 59.

Eccles. xii. 7.

Acts vii. 60.

² Dr S. Clarke admits the word "Lord" here and elsewhere, on like occasions, to refer to Christ. (Script. Doctr. No. 614, 691, 698, 706.) See also Mr Wm. Hey's Tract, pp. 79, 83.

³ That these invocations are of the nature of *prayers*, see Whitby's Tract, c. i. § vii.

became the characteristic description of the disciples,
 1 Cor. i. 2. before they took the title of *christians*, that they
^hSee note F. “called upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord^h.”
 All this was the deliberate homage, as unto God, of
 Exod. xxii. those who were firmly persuaded, that “he who sacri-
 20; comp. xxxiv. 14. ficeth unto any God save unto the Lord only, he shall
 be utterly destroyed;” who braved and welcomed death,
 Ps. xliv. 20. rather than “stretch out the hands to a strange
 God;” who spurned the Pagan notion of a created and
secondary God; whose chosen business it was, at all
 Gal. iv. 8. cost, to call men off from “doing service unto them
 which by nature¹ are no Gods.” When then, they
 without reservation gave example, and without ex-
 planation taught, to worship Christ, they manifested
 their settled conviction that he is no *created* being—
 Stillingfleet, that he is “*by nature* (‘really, that is, and substan-
 iii. 590. tially’) God.”

Thus it is seen that the apostles ascribe to Christ
 every *attribute*, and *operation*, and *honour*—every per-
 fection and prerogative—of divine majesty; proving
 Mark xiv. 61. clearly that they regarded him as the “Son of the
 Blessed,” by a real communion in the entire nature
 of the Almighty Father; as is set forth by one of them,
 in a single and most comprehensive expression: “In
 Col. ii. 9; him dwelleth all the *fulness of the Godhead*¹ *bodily*.”
 comp. John i. 14.

Such are the views, expressed in their own per-
 sons, of those who, by daily conversing with our Lord²,
ⁱSee note H.

¹ See Waterland, 2nd Def. of Qu. xxiv. Dr Knight, ch. i. No. 180; Potter, pp. 93—98, in reply to Dr S. Clarke’s interpretation of this text. Ser. Doctr. No. 180.

Acts ix. 1—6. ² This does not strictly apply to St Paul or to St Luke. The former
 Gal. i. 1, 11, received his information by special revelation; the latter, from the apostles.
 12.
 Luke i. 1, 2.

received many more explications of his doctrines than they could conveniently transmit to us, and had the light of the Holy Spirit to ensure their *true interpretation* of them. But they have also recorded a portion of his instruction on the same points, *in his own words*, in which we may read the sufficient grounds of their belief; although, for a reason already assigned, his mode of imparting these dangerous pretensions was indirect, and rather through allusions and inferences, than by plain assertion.

Thus he insinuates his ETERNAL and UNCHANGING nature, in those remarkable words, already noticed: "Before Abraham was, I am." Nor did his enemies fail to discern his meaning therein: for they "took up stones to cast at him," as *judicially* liable to this punishment, for arrogating to himself, falsely and blasphemously, as they imagined, both a name^k and attribute of God. And he did not disavow this imputed claim, which, considering its nature, is a satisfactory proof that they rightly^l understood him. He yet more clearly affirmed this doctrine to St John, after his ascension, by applying to himself the very same language by which the divine eternity had been of old described; the purport of which, therefore, he knew, must be familiar to him whom he addressed: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last;" "the living one³." He repre-

John viii. 58.

^k See note I.

^l See Serm. I. note G.

Rev. xxii. 13;
i. 17, 18.
comp. i. 8;
Isai. xli. 4;
xliv. 6;
xlviii. 12.

³ The Jews understood the expressions of Isaiah, here referred to, to assert the absolute eternity of the Father. They can mean nothing less of the Son. Allix, p. 338. See also Tillotson, Serm. II. on John i. 14, and Whitby's Tract, p. 49. For "the Living One" (ὁ ζῶν), comp. John v. 26; and see Dr S. Clarke, Script. Doctr. 667, and Wardlaw, p. 90.

John v. 19. sends himself as ALMIGHTY by these words: "What things soever the Father doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise;" for so, if the Father be omnipotent, the Son must also be: as he elsewhere proclaimeth: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."

Matt. xxviii. 18.
Rev. ii. 23; comp. Jer. xvii. 10.
1 Kings viii. 39. His OMNISCIENCE is herein implied: "I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts;" for so is the same attribute of the Father intimated. And he yet more pointedly makes this comparison, saying; John x. 15. "as the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father." And his universal intuition was exhibited on earth, by his constant knowledge of the secret thoughts of all, and of all future events; and is, moreover, essential to that future judgment which he is to carry out, and to that disclosure of the whole character of all men, which he taught us to expect from him. His OMNIPRESENCE—that boundless diffusion by which the divine essence "filleteth heaven and earth"—extends its perception and influence through the whole compass of creation—was announced in his promise to be with his disciples "alway," "in all the world," whither they should carry his "everlasting gospel;" and "wherever two or three should be gathered together, there to be in the midst of them," and everywhere to hear their prayer. And it seems covertly insinuated in his discourse with Nicodemus, to whom he speaks as being, as to his *divine nature*, "which is," in heaven, while yet conversing on earth¹.

¹ Different views are entertained as to the meaning of this passage. Tillotson, Sermon. II. on John i. 14; Wardlaw, p. 95; Burgh, 65; Scott (Bible, ad loc.), who quotes Bishop Hall; and Mr Wm. Hey, Tract, pp. 20, 75, support the meaning here assigned.

Thus as to the *Attributes* of the Godhead. And we find, in his recorded words, many notices of his divine OPERATIONS, past, present, and to come, in complete analogy with those of the Father. “Unto God belong the issues from death;” “He killeth and maketh alive;” “bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.” Yet did Christ say, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up:” and “he spake of the temple of his body”—the abode of his present deity. As he more openly expresseth elsewhere: “*I lay down* my life, that I might *take* it again. No man² taketh it from me, but I lay it down *of myself*. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.” Hence his return from the grave, agreeably to this promise, is justly represented as a sure testimony to his divinity: “he was declared to be *the Son of God with power*, by the resurrection^m from the dead.” And the “life” which he elsewhere, as here, professed, and was thus shewn, to “have in himself,” “*as the Father hath*,” he asserted his equal power to bestow on all: “As the Father³,” saith he, “raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom *he will*.” Accordingly, he cried, “Lazarus, come forth:” “Maid, arise:” and the dead obeyed. He represents as his own work, the future resurrection

Ps. lxxviii. 20.

Deut. xxxii. 39.

1 Sam. ii. 6.

John ii. 19.

John ii. 21.

John x. 17, 18.

Rom. i. 4.

^m See note K.

John v. 26; comp. i. 4.

John v. 21.

John xi. 43.

Luke viii. 54.

² οὐδείς. “No one.” The original expression is more general than that of our version.

³ What other motive can be imagined for these frequent assimilations of himself to the Father, but to lead to a belief of their equality? Supposing him to be only a man, what instruction would they convey? or how consist with becoming reverence towards God? with becoming humility in his *servant*?

John vi. 44. of the just: "*I* will raise him up at the last day."
 To his own proper bounty, he ascribes the everlasting
 John x. 27, reward to ensue; "My sheep hear my voice, and
 28. I know them, and they follow me; and *I give* unto
 them eternal life:" to himself the universal *judgment*,
 Matth. xxv. when "the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and
 31. all the holy angels with him."

When in the exercise of another prerogative of
 Luke v. 20, the "King of kings," saying, "Thy sins are forgiven
 21. thee," it was objected to him, that he "spake" blas-
 Mark ii. 7. phemies, for who can forgive sins but *God alone*"
 (of whose "law sin is the transgression"); he did
 not deny the right to be exclusively divine, nor yet
 disclaim his pretension to it, by pleading a mere
 deputed authority; but proceeded, by conferring the
 desired boon, to prove, as he himself expresses, that
 "the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive
 sins"—that there did reside within his human "fa-
 shion," that nature to which pardon doth properly
 appertain. Why but to keepⁿ their minds alive to
 this his lofty and mysterious character, by a new hint
 of it, should he introduce this miracle with language
 which he foreknew would give offence; and, to *our*
 view at least, unsuitable, or at any rate unnecessary
 to it, as a mere act of compassion, or as an evidence
 of his mission; and hitherto, for such ends, unusual
 with him? Nor did he scruple to *dispense with*
 the *divine laws*, justifying his license by this asser-
 tion; "the Son of Man is Lord also of the sabbath;"
 an authority which could belong to him only as
 having himself hallowed it: it being the promise
 Ps. cxix. 112. and boast of God's servants, to "*perform* his sta-

ⁿ See note
L.

Allix, 242.

tutes alway, even unto the end.” Out of the riches of his own grace he professed to impart comfort to the soul of man: “*My* peace I give unto you: not John xiv. 27. as the world giveth, give I unto you.” In his own person, he promised to send forth the Holy Spirit¹ of God; “If I depart, *I* will send him unto you.” John xvi. 7; comp. xx. 22. Moreover, though he taught us to pray to “our Father” in all our necessities, he invited us to address our supplications to *himself* also; “whatsoever ye John xiv. 13. shall ask in² *my* name, that will *I* do.” He who hath all blessings to bestow, for the body and the soul, which man can enjoy here, or desire hereafter, is surely God; for by what higher power do we know God?

By these manifold and clear testimonies avouching his greatness, he consistently commanded for himself the HOMAGE due unto it. While he confirmed the commandment, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, Matt. iv. 10. and *him only* shalt thou serve;” he thought it no contradiction to require for himself *the same* reverence, without distinction or reserve—“that all men should John v. 23. honour the Son³, *even as* they honour the Father;”

¹ Bull quotes the reasoning of Augustine: “Quomodo Deus non est, qui dat Spiritum Sanctum? Imò quantus Deus est, qui dat Deum!” “How is he not God, who gives the Holy Spirit? Yea, how great a God is he who gives God!” D. F. N. Sect. II. c. iii. n. 17.

² “In my name”—i. e. calling on my name—“ask of me.” Accordingly the Vulgate has, “Si quid petieritis *me*, in nomine meo, hoc faciam.” This form better corresponds with the promise “that will *I* do.” It is also exemplified in the prayers addressed to him by the apostles, and in the language employed by them on the occasion of any miracle performed by them.

Acts i. 24.
Acts iii. 6;
comp. iv. 7.

³ That worship belonged to him who should come as the Messiah, had been foreshewn: Ps. ii. 12; xlv. 11; lxviii. 32; lxxii. 11; Isai. xlix. 23. Thus were these, and other passages, understood by the *ancient Jews*. Allix, 232—4: see also 237.

with all the worship belonging to the Lord God Almighty, in his pure and spiritual essence, and in his every relation to man. To express at once his communion in all the “fulness of the Godhead”—in all the attributes and prerogatives that belong to the divine nature and character, thus *severally* claimed by

John xiv. 9. him—he pronounceth; “He that hath seen me hath
 John xvi. 15. seen the Father;” “all things that the Father hath
 are mine¹,” “his power, my power; his works, my
 works; his spirit, my spirit: our perfections common;
 our nature equal; our glory one.”

Waterl. ii.
112.

The conclusion to be drawn from these branches of evidence, whether in the words of our Lord himself, or in those of his apostles, rests on sure ground. He who “hath all things that the Father hath;” to whom the divine *attributes, operations, and worship*
 John v. 19. belong; who is whatever the Father is, and “doeth whatsoever things the Father doth,” and rightfully claims whatsoever honour to the Father is due—must be God. We know the Father by no other tokens. He is not revealed to us by a description of his *essence*, but only of his inherent properties and powers, his works, and his relations to us-ward. God is he, who is Eternal, Omnipotent, Omniscient, Omnipresent, Creator, Preserver, Lawgiver, Lord, and Judge². It is by such marks that Scripture teaches us to know the divine object of our worship: we can present him

¹ Macknight (Harmony of the Gospels, ad loc.) observes of this text; “Those who oppose the divinity of Christ, seem to be at a loss for an explication of this passage.”

² See Waterland, vol. ii. 11. Hey’s Lect. B. iv. Art. ii. sect. 16; and Mr W. Hey’s Tracts, p. 13, &c. to which he refers.

no otherwise to our mind. And it is under each and all of them, that it calls upon us to honour Christ. If when he is represented under the features of man's nature, we gather thereby that he is perfect man; how can we consistently deny that he is perfect God, when all the perfections of the Godhead are ascribed to him? By what intelligible and safe distinction, do we adopt unequal conclusions, from premises in all points matched? Can we believe such language to have been employed *by* him, and *of* him under his instruction, to teach us that he was less than it reasonably purports? It is solemnly addressed to us, that we may learn thereby, and believe, the truth. What other truth could it be expected that we should infer from it? Can such characteristics be appropriated, under the controul of the "Spirit of wisdom," to an infinite, independent, almighty and immutable Being; and, at the same time, to one created, ministerial, frail and finite? How, by them, can we know the Father for God, if, the same belonging to Christ, he be not God³?

By so many, and various, and consistent lessons, Christ gradually instilled into the minds of his chosen disciples, that doctrine of his divine nature, which they "preached in all the world." It was to be the cause of his death, through the blindness and prejudices of the Jewish rulers. Therefore its *direct* assertion, which, perceiving his meaning, they eagerly watched for as necessary to give a legal sanction for

³ See Waterland, 1st and 2nd Def. of Qu. vi. vii.: and vol. iv. pp. 54, 58.

Comp.
Luke xxii.
70.
Mark xiv.
62.
Matth. xxvi.
63, 64; and
see Serm.
iii.

their violence, was reserved by him until all else “which had been written of him should have been fulfilled,” and the purpose of his life should have been carried out. Then at length, upon the solemn adjuration of the high priest, “Art thou the Son of God?” he confessed and denied not, but said, “I am.” This great truth, now thus openly proclaimed, was, after his resurrection, held up by him to the perpetual and *necessary* faith of man, in the words of my text, as the very groundwork of that final revelation, concerning the true God, which he came to make: “Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the *name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*.”

° See note
M.

Baptism was not a *novel* institution: it had long been familiar to the Jews, as a preparatory rite for receiving proselytes from the many gods of the heathen to the one “Lord God of Israel;” in whom, before receiving it, they *made profession of their new faith*¹. Hence the brevity of our Saviour’s injunction. When he thus summarily adopted this form, as a token of admission to his better covenant, and a channel of its grace; the Jews would at once understand him to hold up, in this indispensable, preliminary creed, *the God* whom he required all to acknowledge, unto his salvation. The God thus proclaimed is not the Father alone; but, with him, the Son and the Holy Ghost, with undistinguished reverence. This formulary of belief includes the three persons of the Blessed Trinity,

¹ See Wall’s “Hist. of Infant Baptism,” Introduction, and vol. i. 26. Also Lightfoot’s Works, vol. vi. 406, 416; xi. 364, 5; and Waterland, ii. 175.

with exact uniformity of confession. Whatever honour, therefore, is claimed by virtue of it as due to one, must, by the identity of expression, be commanded to each. And that honour is, *religious faith and adoration*. They are taught herein to be, together, that *one God*, whom the Jews were to own as the ancient worship of their fathers^p, and for whom the heathen were to lay aside their many idols of mere imaginary being. It is a final and perpetual confirmation, by an ordinance more instructive than words, of that inherent dignity in Christ, for the right understanding of which it had been a constant aim of his preaching to prepare the way. It is that truth concerning him which the apostle holds up, when, in opposition to the “gods many and lords many” of heathen mythology, he teaches; “To us there is but one God the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him;” thus substituting the Father and Son, as the one Lord God our maker, in the room of all unreal deities; and, unless denying the *Father* to be *Lord*, proclaiming *Christ* to be *God*².

^p See Sermon.
1. note L.

¹ Cor. viii. 5,
6.

It must not be overlooked, that two of Christ's miracles appear to want both the motives and character which distinguish the other displays of his power, and to have been exhibited as evidences of

² Compare Mark xii. 29; Eph. iv. 5, where the Father is called “Lord,” as here is Christ; and John i. 1; xx. 28; Rom. ix. 5, where Christ is called “God,” as here the “Father” is. See Waterland, i. 7; ii. 31, 68—71; iii. 401, 2; Pearson, 162; Bull. D. F. N. Sect. iv. c. iv. n. 5. Wm. Hey's Tract, p. 32.

his divine *nature*, rather than as credentials of his *mission*. When he went privately to his disciples, “walking on the sea,” his aim surely was, to manifest to them, who already owned him for the Messiah, and, as such, had “forsaken all and followed him,” something beyond their present knowledge; viz. that beneath his human substance lay hidden another superior to its laws; that in him subsisted bodily the pure essence of that spiritual Being, who “alone (as they had learned from Job) treadeth upon the waves.” Accordingly, they at first said, “It is a *spirit*,” and when they knew who that spirit was, they “worshipped him, saying, of a truth thou art the *Son of God*”—a declaration drawn from them¹ by no other *single* miracle; though every miracle, being an attestation from heaven to his truth, proved him to be, what he openly professed to them, the *Messiah*. This confession, therefore, meant *more*; and is suitably expressed by that one of his titles, which *signifies more*^q.

Matt. xiv.
23.

Matt. xix.
27.

Job ix. 8.

^qSerm. III.
note L.

Again. When before three, selected from the twelve, he was “transfigured, and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light;” what could be the aim of this display, save to make these chosen confidants (in the language of one of

Luke v. 8.

¹ i.e. not *collectively*: otherwise there is the instance of Nathanael, John i. 49. Bishop Horsley considers Peter’s address to our Lord, after the miraculous draft of fishes, to imply an apprehension of something more than human in his character: “Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.” He regards it as an expression of that conviction, so rooted in the minds of the Jews, that man may not “look upon God, and live.” See Gen. xxxii. 30; Exod. xxxiii. 20; Judges vi. 22; xiii. 20, 22; Isaiah vi. 5. Horsley’s Tracts, pp. 239—40.

them) “eye-witnesses of his majesty?” a vision need- 2 Pet. i. 16.
 less for other ends of his mission, and therefore to
 be “told to no man, until he should be risen again Matt. xvii. 9.
 from the dead;” when the doctrine of his divine nature,
 openly proved by both events, would also be openly See Rom. i.
 proclaimed. This exhibition of himself was followed 4.
 by a suitable declaration, like unto that just recorded,
 but now proceeding from the Father himself; who,
 “by a voice from the excellent glory,” the bright 2 Pet. i. 17.
 symbol of his unseen majesty, proclaimed; “This is
 my beloved Son.”

The evidence, full and manifold as it is thus
 seen to be, is not exhausted. The testimony of
 Scripture to the Godhead of the Saviour is not con-
 fined to language having a *direct* reference to his
 divine character; but breaks out also in *incidental*
 expressions suited to it, and giving an harmonious
 colouring to the whole. Seeing he was on earth
God, as well as *man*, we might expect to find in
 the faithful record of his life, a corresponding diver-
 sity of manner; at once the humbleness and lowly
 graces with which he would teach us, by his exam-
 ple, to adorn our nature; and, on becoming occasions,
 a loftiness of carriage, manifesting the consciousness
 of his proper glory: and in such consistency we must
 acknowledge a strong confirmation of the truth. We
 have, in this anticipation, the very features of the
 gospel portrait of our Lord. With a meekness and
 gentleness and condescension, which have given to
 the christian model of human excellence a tone so
 different from the most perfect draughts of any earthly
 school; there is combined, at times, in our Redeemer,

a majesty of demeanour, suited only to divine sovereignty. Let us appeal to instances.

It has already been noticed, that Christ never so expresses himself as to sanction the belief of his community with man in the mode of his relation to God; or of any inferiority in himself to the Father, or of any dependance upon him, in his *nature*. While Moses, the highest *human* messenger of divine truth, like every creature of God, is confessed for his *servant*; the Saviour never owns a like character, but claims the far other connection of "*Son*." And this distinction, thus asserted by name, is to be traced in his deportment. Moses uniformly ascribes the law which he was commissioned to deliver, to God. Christ speaks as one *himself* having authority. "I say unto you," is the sufficient sanction of his word: "A new commandment *I give* unto you:" "This is *my* commandment:" "If a man keep *my* saying, he shall never see death;" an assertion at which they who looked upon him as a man only, were astonished. Moses wrought miracles as by the finger of God; Christ, as by the fiat of his own almighty will. "Peace, be still," to the raging elements, is the voice of one knowing himself "mightier than the voice of many waters." "I will, be thou clean," is the language of inherent, not of delegated power. See how Elijah recalls the soul which had "returned to God," and how Christ. One "crieth unto the Lord;" the other "speaketh the word only," and "the spirit cometh again." "If I will that he tarry till I come," is the tone of none less than the Lord of life. Could it be in the propriety of mere man-

Serm. i. 22,
23.

Deut. xxxiv.
10.

Exod. xx. 1.

Matt. xviii.
22.

John xiii. 34.

John xv. 12.
John viii. 51.

John viii. 52.
Exod. viii.
ix.; comp.
Gen. xli. 16,
from the
same *pen*.

Mark iv. 39;
comp. Ps.
lxxxix. 9.
Ps. xciii. 4.

Matt. viii. 3.

1 Kings xvii.
21.

Luke viii. 55;
comp. vii.
14, 15.

John xxi. 22.

hood to "breathe on his disciples," and say, "Re-
ceive ye the Holy Ghost?" intimating by his action,
no less than by his word, the *immediate* procession
from him of the "*Spirit of God*." Thus also, abso-
lutely, as from his *own person*, he imparted the
powers which he had so displayed: "Heal the sick,
cleanse the lepers, raise the dead;" and even the
prerogative of "forgiving and retaining sin;" which,
with whatever limitations it was bestowed, bespoke
divine authority in him who could confer it, as con-
vincingly as had done his own repeated exercise of
it, in the fullest sense. Nor does this peculiarity
of manner fail, in the instance of his prophecies.
He speaks as knowing *in himself*. The like fore-
sight of his apostles is always ascribed to the inspi-
ration of the Holy Spirit.

John xx. 22.

Matt. x. 8.

John xx. 23.

Luke vii. 48.

Comp. John
xvi. 2, 5; xxi.
18, 19, 22;
Luke xxi. 6;
with Acts xi.
28; xx. 23.

Further, he who "sought not his own glory,"
who had far other aim in his ministry, would not
make a vain, still less an irreverent boast. Could
he then, if less than God, say of himself; "In this
place is one greater than the temple"—holier than
"the place where the honour of God dwelleth"? He
who is emphatically called, "The Amen, the faith-
ful and true witness," could not, unless he were truly
God, exalt himself to a level with the Father, as in
the following language: "Ye believe in *God*; believe
also in *me*," inviting all to equal faith in both, and
elsewhere promising a like blessing to such as should
exhibit it: "He that believeth on him that sent
me, hath everlasting life:" "He that believeth *on me*
hath everlasting life." With like reciprocity of ex-
pression doth he intimate their union: "Believe me,

John viii. 50.

Matt. xii. 6.

Ps. xxvi. 8.

Rev. iii. 14.

John xiv. 1.

John v. 24.

John vi. 47;
iii. 36.

John xiv. 11.

that I am in the Father, and the Father in me;" and so also makes known the community of their relation to us; "All mine are thine, and thine are mine:" John xvii. 10.

John xiv. 21, "He that keepeth *my* commandment and loveth me, he shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him: *We* will come unto him, and make our abode with him." Surely, apart from the particular purport of each phrase, none could truly assume such an *identity* in every respect with God, but he who is God. It were blasphemy too, in any save him who, as God, is the object of all true religion, to represent himself as the joint author and aim, with the Father, of the Gospel dispensation, in such terms as these: "As John xx. 21. my Father hath sent me, so send I you:" "Upon Matt. xvi. 18. this rock will I build *my* church"—that church which is elsewhere called the church of God (and once also "the church of God which he purchased with his own blood"^a): or when proclaiming from heaven his new apostle; "He is a chosen vessel unto *me*, to bear Acts xx. 28. *my* name before the Gentiles and kings:" or thus; "I John x. 27; know *my* sheep:" "feed *my* lambs." Who but the Lord of heaven could thus boast to dispense its glories: "I go to prepare a place for you;" "I will John xiv. 2, come again, and receive you unto *myself*?" Is it in 3. the character of him who, as a *man*, was "meek and lowly in heart," to assume the pre-eminence which he forbade his disciples to arrogate among themselves, calling himself their "master;" and to proclaim his superiority over all former servants of Matt. xxiii. 8, 10.

Matt. xii. 41, 42. God; "A greater than Jonas," "A greater than Solomon, is here?" Is this the language of a holy man, comparing himself with his fellows? especially

of one whose imperative instruction it is, that “each Phil. ii. 3. should esteem other better than themselves.” St Paul caught the true spirit of his master, when he called himself “the least of the apostles.” Had 1 Cor. xv. 9. Christ been, as the apostle was, a man only, thus too had he exemplified his own precept. It is only as an intimation of a *hidden* excellence in him, which he was desirous to make known to them (and touching which his meekness tended to second their prejudices and confirm their blindness), that this occasional adoption of a lofty style is consistent and intelligible. Either the language is vain and assuming, or his being is divine. There is no other way of reconciling this majestic tone with his self-denying character, than by the doctrine, otherwise clearly inculcated, of his complex nature, with the separate elements of which these opposite manners severally agree; unless as he was both the “Son of God” and the “Son of Man,” titles concurrently assumed, as we must believe, with an express view to this mystery. Nor did he, on any occasion, discourage the high conceptions which his disciples were thus led to entertain of him, or the corresponding reverence with which they regarded and treated him. He allowed in them, as in his enemies, the opinion of his pretension to the divine nature to go uncontradicted; which, if unfounded in truth, would have been disparaging to God, and pernicious to themselves. Surely, “He who had a right to utter such Hey, ii. 266. things, and was *humble* while he uttered them, can have nothing too great conceived of him.” The creed, which regards Christ as both God and Man, is

alone consistent with the *whole* of scripture; consequently, is alone scriptural.

There is a similar corroboration of the truth which we are seeking to establish, in the manner of *the apostles*. If they came at length to know in Christ

John i. 14. “the Word made flesh”—the invisible nature of God in union with that human fashion which they had

1 John i. 1. “seen and handled”—their language would be sure to take a tincture from their creed, even where not treating of this doctrine. They would speak of him in terms too lofty to suit a created being, however elevated his rank in this scale, or however sacred his mission. And we discover abundant traces of such a reverence. Nothing, generally, can be more strongly marked in them, than their deep sense of awe towards God; the jealousy with which they vindicate from every creature “the honour due unto his name.” To them, all are as dust in the balance in comparison with the great Maker of all. Only in magnifying the name of *Christ*, is no such distinction observed, no fear evinced of encroaching upon the majesty of God. They speak of their master, as one whom, on earth, “his own right hand did teach;” who possessed *in himself*¹ the divine energies he displayed. “He knew

Ps. xlv. 4. in himself (says one of them) that virtue had gone

Mark v. 30. *out of him*”—that his inherent power had been exercised. And thus they regarded his help to themselves from heaven. They saw it to be sufficient to

¹ See also Luke iv. 30; John x. 39; and compare Acts v. 19; xii. 7. There must have been some motive for preserving this marked distinction. Why is Christ never represented as delivered by the interposition of the Father?

rely on *him*. How differently do they refer to like effects wrought by themselves! And why, if there was no real distinction, but both exercised a vicarious power? They confess, like Moses, to work in another's strength, ascribing the glory to the giver. And that giver, who to Moses was God, to them was Christ. It is written by one of them, that during his ministry on earth "he gave them their power Matt. x. 1. to heal:" and, after his ascension, he is "the Lord Mark xvi. 20. who worked with them, and confirmed the word with signs following." "The Lord, even Jesus, Acts ix. 17. hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight," was the effectual word of Ananias to Paul: "In Acts iii. 6. the name of Jesus Christ, rise up and walk," was the successful bidding of Peter to the lame. And when "the people ran together unto them, greatly Acts iii. 11. wondering," he said; "Why look ye so earnestly on Acts iii. 12. us, as though by our *own power* or holiness we had made this man to walk?" "*His* name, through Acts iii. 16. faith in his name, hath made this man strong." The "Holy One" and "the Just," the "Prince of Life," himself², in his own proper mercy and might, "hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all." Such is the natural force of all this language. It ascribes miracles immediately to Christ, just as on other occasions to God; and without any reservation, or hint of distinction. From him the apostles professed to have derived the gift of the divine "Comforter;" "Being by the right- Acts ii. 33. hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath

² Such is the real meaning of "*his name*."

shed forth this, which ye now see and hear."

Accordingly, the Spirit is represented by them indifferently, as the Spirit "of God," and "of

1 Cor. iii.
16; Gal. iv.
6; Rom. viii.
9.

Christ." St Paul imputes his mission alike to both; and claims to have received the gospel, "not

Gal. i. 1, 12.

of *man*, but by revelation of *Jesus Christ*." Could Jesus Christ then be *man only*, in his estimation?

Col. i. 13;
Rev. xii.
10; Rom. i.
1; xv. 19.

The kingdom of heaven is called alike "the kingdom of God," and "of Christ:" The Gospel is

said to be of both: its preachers and disciples, the "servants" of both. The scheme of salvation re-

Tit. i. 1;
Phil. i. 1;
Eph. vi. 6.
2 Pet. i. 1.

vealed in it, is called "the righteousness of God, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ." Supplication is

2 Pet. i. 2.

made for "grace and peace through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord;" and "for comfort,

Col. ii. 2.

from the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, (even)¹ the Father, and of Christ." They invite all,

Rom. x. 12;
comp. Rom.
x. 9.

as we have seen, to "call on the name" of Christ, in every need; not apprehending herein any violation

of the commandment, which forbiddeth to lift up the hand to other than the Lord God. To him

Exod. xxxiv.
14.

they applied for mercy and grace, for guidance in doubt, and for help unto holiness; as exercising, with

the Father, a supreme controul over the course of natural events, and over the thoughts, and wills, and

affections of men. He is appealed to in those solemn adjurations², by which the Apostle, after the manner

¹ For "even" instead of "and" (*καί*), see Dodd's Bible, and Mac-knight, ad loc.

² This is admitted by the *Socinians* to be the force of the passages about to be referred to, though they do not draw the same conclusion, of the divine *nature* of Christ, but only of his divine *providence* and *authority*. See Rees's *Racov. Cat.* p. 213—216.

of men, calls to witness the all-seeing eye; "I charge thee before God and the Lord Jesus Christ:" "We speak before God in Christ." Equal boast is made of "fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ;" and like exhortation made, to "continue in the Son, and in the Father." Warning is given of the "glorious appearing of the great God" and our Saviour Jesus Christ," as of equal import: and the "day of Christ," and "of God," is held up alike to apprehension. The recompence which men shall receive of their works, is ascribed to both. For thus the prophet had forewarned of the Father; "Behold, the Lord God will come, and his reward is with him:" and, "Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me," is, in the vision of the beloved Apostle, the parallel prediction and promise of the Lamb. The joys laid up for the righteous are represented, in a figure, now as "the supper of the great God," and now "of the Lamb." Christ is frequently spoken of under that title of "Lord," which corresponds with the "*Jehovah*" of the Hebrew tongue; and by which, though the peculiar honour of the divine nature, and incommunicable to any created being, the Messiah had, as we have seen, been predicted. In what full and lofty sense the Evangelist understood it of him, may be gathered from that other "name which, he tells us, was written on his vesture, and on his thigh"—"King of kings, and Lord of lords." The Psalmist having pronounced, "The Lord of hosts, he is the king of glory," the Evangelist ascribes the former of these distinctions, in the mouth of the prophet, to Christ; and the Apostle

2 Tim. iv. 1;
2 Cor. xii.
19; comp.
Matt. xxvi.
63.

1 John i. 3.
1 John ii. 24.

Tit. ii. 13.
bSee note O.

Phil. i. 10.
2 Pet. iii. 12.

Isai. xl. 10.

Rev. xxii. 12.

Rev. xix. 17,
9.

cSee note P.

Rev. xix. 16;
xvii. 14;
comp.
1 Tim. vi. 14,
15; Deut. x.
17; Ps.
cxxxvi. 3.
Ps. xxiv. 10.

John xii. 41;
Isai. vi. 3.

1 Cor. ii. 8. hesitates not to affirm, that he was the "Lord of glory, whom they crucified."

It almost seems that, with the express view to leave those without excuse who see not in the Father and Son a common majesty, no form of speech appropriated to the former has been left unapplied to the other. Christ is called the "Holy One¹," and the "True One;" and these are characteristics of the Father. He is called "Lord over all," the "Light of men," the "Shepherd of his people," the "Husband" of his church. It is written of the "most Highest," that he will "render vengeance to his enemies;" and so that "the Lord Jesus shall be revealed, *taking vengeance* on them that obey not his gospel." It is said of that loving-kindness, by which the Almighty schooleth, through affliction, the souls of men, "to do them good at the latter end;" "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth:" so are we taught, that the same benevolent discipline is administered by the present providence of the Lamb; "As many as I love I chasten." The same all-seeing, judicial scrutiny of the secret thoughts and affections of men, is ascribed to both: "I the Lord search the heart; I try the reins," is pronounced in the person of the Father: "I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts," in that of the Son. The apostle exhorteth to forbearance, after the example of both, as exhibiting like mercy to man, who hath rebelled against their equal

Rev. iii. 7.
Acts iii. 14;
comp. Rev.
vi. 10; xv. 4;
1 John ii. 20;
v. 20.
Rom. x. 12;
Acts x. 36;
John i. 4, 8;
viii. 12;
comp.
1 John i. 5;
Rev. xxi. 33.
Sheph. Ps.
xxiii. 1;
Isai. xl. 11;
John x. 11.
Husb. Jer.
ii. 2.
Eph. v. 23,
25, 29, 32.
Rev. xxi. 9.
Deut. xxxii.
41.
2 Thess. i. 7,
8.
Heb. xii. 6.

Rev. iii. 19.

Jer. xvii. 10.

Rev. ii. 23.

¹ Thus Dr Doddridge renders ὁ ἅγιος, ὁ ἀληθινός. And he expresses his surprise, that "no greater stress should have been laid upon this text, in proof of the deity of our blessed Redeemer," seeing these titles are "so peculiarly the prerogative of God." Fam. Exp. ad loc.

authority; "As God hath forgiven," and "as Christ forgave you," "so also do ye." And the "long-suffering" of both to us-ward, is magnified alike.

Eph. iv. 32;
Col. iii. 13.
1 Tim. i. 16;
Rom. ii. 4.

If some of these expressions do not of themselves imply a divine nature, still it is to be borne in mind, that they have been employed under inspiration as hints to us either of the attributes of the most high God, or of his real relations, or purposes, or affections towards man. And it has seemed good to him that his Son should be held up to us under *all the same images*. So that not only the stronger delineations of the divine character have been introduced in the portraiture of his "only-begotten," but every subordinate grace carefully preserved to him; thus presenting him, with a minute exactness, as "the express image of his Father's person." It must then be the aim of all this instruction, to fill us with like conceptions of these sacred persons, and with equal reverence towards them. If the nature of Christ be in ought inferior to that of the Father, the language of scripture would seem to have been studiously selected, to disguise, not display the truth.

Heb. i. 3.

The book of Revelation, obscure, as might be expected, where it deals in prophecy; and necessarily figurative in the representation of "things² unspeakable," through their want of any resemblance to what hath yet "entered into the heart of man," after

2 Cor. xii. 4.

1 Cor. ii. 9.

² "Things"—*ῥήματα*. See Macknight ad loc. "Necessarily"—See what Mr Locke says as to the *impossibility* of St Paul's describing what he saw, when "caught up into Paradise," from the want of any corresponding notions in *us*. Hum. Und. B. iv. ch. 18. sect. 3.

whose thoughts language is framed—is yet intelligible enough, in the notices it gives of the Redeemer's glory. Besides the direct titles, and attributes, and honour of God, therein ascribed to him, there are striking testimonies to his divine character, in the way of clear inference. Of whom are angels ministers, but of God only? Yet it is written therein; "I Jesus, have sent my angel to testify unto you." To whom do priests do service, save to the Lord? Yet it is spoken of the blessed hereafter; "They shall be priests of God and of Christ." And already is the holy symphony recorded, in which they shall "make oblation" to both, of praise and thanksgiving for the mercies of redemption; "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." The kingdoms of the world are sung of, as "the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ," over which "he shall reign for ever." When the angel shewed unto St John the city of the "Holy Jerusalem," in which he saw "no temple, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it;" and which had "no need of the sun neither of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof;" (strange union, unless the Lamb also be Lord God!) in sudden awe and astonishment, he "fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed him these things." But he, knowing to what nature alone adoration belongeth, hastily prevented him, saying; "See thou do it not; *worship God*." Yet it is elsewhere written, on the same divine authority, that he, who now forbad to bow down save to God, he and all

Rev. xxii. 16;
comp. Mark
xiii. 27.

Rev. xx. 6.

Rev. vii. 10.

Rev. xi. 15.

Rev. xxi. 22,
23.

Rev. xxii. 8;
comp. Judg.
xiii. 16.

his peers, by command of God, did worship¹ Christ. Doubtless, they needed not this injunction². It is written, as other things familiar in heaven, “for our learning;” that we also may come “to know who the Son is.” Who, moreover, save he who himself partakes in the fulness of the divine nature, can be exempt from the homage due unto it? No creature of God’s power, however exalted by nature or office, however pure and undefiled, can have immunity from this tribute; or, if holy, can fail to delight in it. All created things are bid to chaunt their Maker’s glory: “Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all ye stars and light;” “praise him, all his angels; praise ye him, all his hosts:” “let every thing that hath breath, praise the Lord!” Yet of *Christ* is it not once hinted, that ought^d of homage is tendered of him in heaven to the Father: but to him, with the Father, is honour there given. “There is one throne of God and of the Lamb”—one majesty and power; for of such attributes is a throne the emblem. “And I heard (saith the beloved Apostle) the voice of many angels, and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice; Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and wisdom, and riches, and strength, and honour, and glory, and

Luke x. 22.

Ps. cxlviii.
cl.

^d See note
Q.

Rev. xxii. 3;
comp. vii.
17.

Rev. v. 17;
comp. Phil.
ii. 10.

¹ At his birth. Luke ii. 13, 14. See Heb. i. 6; comp. Phil. ii. 10, and Rev. v. 11—13.

² Waterland supposes it to have been given, on account of the novelty of the occasion, the *incarnation* of “the Word,”—his appearing in the “form of a servant”—of a *creature*. On this account, the special direction of the Father to the angels might be necessary. Vol. v. 349.

blessing: and every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying; Blessing, and honour, and glory, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and *unto the Lamb*, for ever and ever!"

What end (I must again ask) could the inspired teachers of saving truth propose to themselves, in the employment of all this language, other than to hold up Christ as God? To what other view could it correspond in *their* minds? to what other, could they expect it to lead in *ours*? What doctrine, other than this, called for such language, to set it forth intelligibly; or could be intelligibly and aptly represented by it? To the disclosure of what other lesson was such language so indispensable, as to lead them to adopt it at the risk of being misunderstood, on a question where error would be so pernicious? It is impossible that such lofty expressions could be regarded by them as at once suitable to the Almighty Creator, and to any *creature* of his hand. There is no hint of their being employed of Christ in any *modified*, or *secondary* signification: nor is any one characteristic of the Father left unapplied to the Son, by which to mark in the Father superiority, or distinction of *nature*^e. Suppose Christ to be less than *perfect God*, and we are utterly at a loss to reconcile such terms with his condition: believe him to be of *one majesty with the Father*, and all is consistent, accountable, and just.

^eSee Serm.
iv. note L.

This manifold instruction of Scripture, on which we ground our belief in the divinity of our Lord,

is not the flash and outbreak of human enthusiasm, delighting to honour the object of its admiration with exaggerated praise; but the deliberate lesson of an all-wise God, for an end which he deemed worthy of his especial interposition from heaven. The "Son of God came to give us an understanding, that we may *know him that is true.*" A principal motive of his advent on earth was, to make a final, and therefore, we may be sure, an *accurate* revelation of him, to whom, as Creator and Preserver of all, the worship of all is due: to "turn men from vanities" —from them "which by nature are no gods"—"unto the living God;" to bring back the knowledge of him who "made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is," and "giveth to all life and breath and all things"—among the heathen, who had come to "serve the creature, *besides*¹ the Creator;" to put an end for ever to the idolatrous union of inferior, or imaginary beings, "in the glory due unto his name." Yet the obvious and natural tendency, and the sure, immediate, and constant effect of this language (which could not but be foreseen by him, who well "knew what is in man"—how his mind would interpret and be affected by such instruction)—was, to cause himself to "be honoured of all men, even as they honour the Father." If then he was not God—absolute and perfect God; if, however exalted, he was inferior in *nature*, and consequently of a *created* substance, he took away the very dis-

¹ John v. 20.

Acts xiv. 15.

Gal. iv. 8.

Exod. xx. 11;
comp. Jer.
x. 11.
Acts xvii. 25.

Rom. i. 25.

Ps. xcvi. 8.

John ii. 15.

John v. 23.

¹ "besides"—(παρά,) our version has "*more than* the Creator." For this substitution see Cudworth, iii. 200. Tillotson, Sermon II. on John i. 14. Waterland, i. 164.

inction which it was his aim to establish, between the Creator and the creature; he laid anew the foundation of idolatry; he perpetuated a *secondary* worship, in defiance of all the prohibitions of scripture; he knowingly sanctioned the mixed service which he came to abolish. They who, in obedience to his lessons and precepts, do worship him, if he Gal. iv. 8. “by *nature* is no God”—is not in all things one with the Father—do yet “serve the *creature*,” and the abhorred and damning sin of the Gentile, is constituted by him the duty and merit of the Christian.^f

We cannot believe Christ at all, and *so* believe. We cannot be his true disciples, and make him the “minister of sin.” Seeing he hath thus clearly and variously taught us to regard him as God, and to worship him as God; we are bound, after his authentic revelation, to acknowledge, with the beloved apostle, 1 John v. 20. that “This is the true^g God, and eternal life.” If See note S. he came to instruct, and not to beguile; to enlighten with truth, and not to confound in error; we cannot with reason doubt that the title of “Son of God,” thus interpreted throughout his Word in full abundance, and harmonious variety, is intended to set forth his sameness of nature, and equality of glory, with the Father. When it is taught, throughout those holy Scriptures, which are given us “by inspiration of God” 2 Tim. iii. 15, to “make us wise unto salvation,” “through belief of 2 Thess. ii. 13. the truth”; that he, who in assertion of his divine Isai. xlv. 23. sovereignty “sware by himself, that unto him every Phil. ii. 9—11. knee should bow and every tongue swear,” hath “given unto *his Son* a name, that at the name of Jesus every

knee should bow, and every tongue confess that he is Lord;" we cannot err in "honouring him, even as we honour the Father;" in worshipping him, as did the holy angels when he came from heaven, and his disciples, after he had ascended thither again. When he who in mercy warneth, not to "move him to jealousy with that which is not God;" who, for our good, would save us from the sin and mischief of a false religion; hath yet caused all this language to be written of "his Son," and hath permitted no like praise of any created being—hath ascribed to *man* no excellence above his fellows, save superiority of faith and holiness; we are bound to yield a ready assent to his clear lesson. It becomes our strict duty and wisdom, to adopt the inspired confession of Peter; "We believe and are sure, that thou art that Christ, the Sonⁿ of the living God." We may not hesitate to receive the object of all this agreeing testimony, as, in the language of St Paul, "Christ over all, Godⁱ blessed for ever." We are called upon to hail him, not with the reluctant homage, with which even the *fallen* angels bowed to his remembered greatness, familiar in their days of happiness, saying, "We know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God," "the Son of God most high;" but with the glad and accepted adoration of the "faithless," but at length "believing" Thomas; "My Lord and my God^k!"

Luke ii. 13,
14; comp.
Heb. i. 6.
Luke xxiv.
52.
Deut. xxxii.
21; comp.
Exod. xxxiv.
14.

John vi. 69.
Matt. xvi. 16.
See note C.

Rom. ix. 5.
ⁱ See note T.

Luke iv. 34,
41; viii. 28.
Mark iii. 11.

John xx. 28.
^k See note V.

SERMON III.

MATTH. XXVIII. 19.

Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

I SOUGHT in my two former discourses to establish, that the language of the Old Testament, while jealously inculcating the unity of God, in opposition to the vain idols of Gentilism, is so framed as, though not plainly to reveal, yet by many hints studiously to prepare the way for, the doctrine of a qualification of that unity, in *his own nature*. Sundry passages were adduced implying a plurality, and that a *Trinity*, in the one divine essence; and many others, which assign to him who was to come as the Messiah the peculiar titles and properties of the Most High. Although these intimations partook of the vagueness and obscurity which are always, more or less, the character of prophecy; they sufficed, as I stated, to convey a partial knowledge of the truth to the Jews^a of old (generally, indeed, lost sight of, especially as regarded the divine character of the Messiah, ere “God sent forth his Son”): and they serve to confirm its clearer revelation, subsequently vouchsafed; for which end they were, doubtless, chiefly provided.

^a See note A.

Gal. iv. 4.

I shewed that, in agreement with these notices, when the Messiah came, he in many ways professed

to be the "Son of God" after a strict and proper relation; asserting for himself a participation in the entire glory and majesty of the Father—an inherent fellowship with him in all that enters into our notion of God—substance, attributes, and operations: moreover requiring for himself the honour belonging to God only; and bearing himself, on occasion, in a manner befitting such pretensions, and foreign to every inferior nature.

I proved that such were the views respecting him of those his personal disciples, who were admitted to the more frequent and explicit expositions of his doctrines, which they were to "preach in all the world," and to the perfect memory and right apprehension John xiv. 26. of which they were guided by the Holy Ghost; that his revelation might, through their faithful record, avail to after ages, even unto us. That they at length thus understood him, and regarded him as God, was made appear by references, not only to *his* words handed down by them, but also to their corresponding convictions expressed in *their own* language; and to the less direct, but not less convincing testimony, of their suitable reverence and worship of him.

It should be borne in mind that the apostles, and the first disciples generally, were not, any more than the *unbelieving* Jews of those or later times, prepared lightly to acknowledge in the Messiah a higher nature than that of man. They had been educated in the same views as to the divine unity. And inasmuch as they had a genuine zeal of God, as they proved by a ready abandonment of the world for his service, their religious feelings, as well as their national hope,

would make them very jealous for his honour. Hence, they long shewed themselves slow to believe, or even to understand, any lesson of their adopted master, which seemed to encroach upon it. After they were well persuaded that “Jesus was the Christ¹,” and in that belief had “left all and followed him;” when they heard him challenge their *further* confidence, saying; “ye believe in God, believe also in me;” “if ye had known me (known me, as they must have perceived him to mean, for something *more* than ye as yet acknowledge in me—for something besides *the Christ*) —ye should have known my Father^b also;” they, suspecting his intention to insinuate by this language a real, *natural* relation to God, required a *sign*, in proof of its truth; “Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us;” a request which at once bespeaks their view of his meaning, and their difficulty to receive it. Hence, even to them, Jesus saw it needful to unfold this mystery warily and gradually, as they were able to “bear it.” Nothing but the long and patient instruction of one whom, day by day, they were convinced more and more by “many infallible proofs” to “be true,” and to “teach the way of God in truth,” could have brought them to believe, and to preach, a doctrine opposed to all their early prepossessions; and which they well knew would prove

John i. 41,
45.

Matt. iv. 20,
22.

Luke xviii.
28.

John xiv. 1,
7.

^b See note
N.

John xvi. 12.

John iv.
26—42.

¹ Jesus made no secret of this character to the woman of Samaria, who went and proclaimed it to the inhabitants of her city; and the inhabitants came out, and in the presence of the apostles, after hearing him, acknowledged him as such, openly. To the apostles, then, the truth must have been familiar. Hence, it could not be the confession of him, merely in this light, that drew forth, at a later period, his pointed commendation of Peter. (See Serm. II. note C.)

a stumblingblock in the way of their mission, and bring upon them persecution, and danger, and death.

To evidence thus complete nothing is wanting. If God would, after his customary method of dealing with man, instruct us in the truth through the honest exercise of our natural faculties; he has here afforded ample foundation of a reasonable faith, to all who acknowledge the authority of his Gospel. But there is still a testimony, scarcely noticed; needless indeed, yet strong and convincing. We have seen how Christ's *disciples* understood his doctrine: it remains to be considered, in what light his *enemies* regarded it. However blind to its *truth*, they may be satisfactory witnesses to its *purport*. If they were convinced of his claiming the divine nature, they must have had good ground for their opinion: for a pretension so novel, and so remote from expectation, would not easily be suspected. And if they fiercely reproached him with it, and he made no disavowal; his meaning must have been such as they imputed to him. Else he, who "to this end was born and for this cause John xviii. 37. came into the world, that he should bear witness to the truth," would have cleared up^c a misapprehension c See Serm. i. note G. which created a reasonable prejudice against him, and obstructed the reception of his Gospel.

Now that the unbelieving Jews, upon many occasions, suspected him of arrogating to himself the true nature² of God, is made evident by their treat-

² Dr Whitby (even after he had adopted Arian views) admits that the unbelieving Jews understood Christ to claim to be *God*; and that *this* was the offence which they openly objected to him, on many occasions, as the motive of their displeasure and violence. ("Last Thoughts," pp. 61, 62. See Serm. i. note G.)

ment of him; for they, in consequence, sought to kill him. And this, not altogether through malice and wrath; but also *judicially*, as “guilty of death”
Deut. xiii. 2, 5. after their law, for introducing “a God whom (as they imagined) their fathers had not known.” The passages in the Old Testament which intimate this lofty character of the Messiah, though once better understood (as has been already noticed^d), had become obscure, through the general disuse of the original language of scripture, and the ignorance of its professed interpreters. The great body of this people expected a *mere man*^e in their Messiah: otherwise, they who at once acknowledged Jesus in this character, would have felt neither displeasure nor surprise at his assuming to be more. The reply of the Pharisees to his question, “What think ye of Christ, whose son is he?” and his unanswered disproof of the mere human origin they assigned to him from David,
Matt. xxii. 42. “If David call him Lord, how is he his son¹?” shew, both that the scriptures, to which he thus appealed, did properly contain the doctrine of his deity, and that the Jews in general had lost the knowledge of it. Thus this people had come to fasten their whole mind

^d See Sermon. i. p. 26, and note L.

^e See note B.

Matt. xxii. 45.

¹ When he asks of them, “Whose son is he?” they answer, “The son of David.” He then refers them to a passage of scripture, which shews that this could not be the *whole* truth, as to the parentage of the Messiah; for that David speaks of him who was to be his son, in language which ascribes to him a *divine* nature. He must, then, be the Son of God, as well as of David; and in the one case, as in the other, in a *proper*, not a *metaphorical* sense. Such is evidently the inference to which he sought to lead them from this text of scripture. Had they previously expected in the Messiah the true *Son of God*, they would have been at no loss for a reply. But they were ignorant of such a doctrine of scripture (though *he* was not), and were silenced.

upon the simple unity of God, against the true sense in which it had been taught, and partly at least understood of old, and was now revealed by Christ; as perversely as their fathers had swerved from it in every sense, to follow idols. The dread of forfeiting their expected deliverance, by “moving the Lord to jealousy with that which is not God,” exasperated even those who cleaved not to him in their hearts, against one who seemed to preach “a new God.” In such a teacher, miracles were no proof, to their minds, of a divine mission. For they applied to him the warning given through Moses; “If there arise among you a prophet, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder *come to pass* whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods whom thou hast not known, and serve them; thou *shalt not hearken* unto the words of that prophet; for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul: and *that prophet shall be put to death*, because he hath spoken to turn you away from the Lord your God². So shalt thou put the evil away from the midst of thee^f.”

Deut. xxxii.
21.

Deut. xxxii.
17.

Deut. xiii.
1—3.

^f See note
C.

Herein have we a key to the inconsistent behaviour of the Jews towards Christ; herein the cause, why

² Mr Locke says; “We find no other law but that against false prophets, Deut. xviii. 20, whereby *making himself the Son of God* deserved death.” Surely, considering the point at issue with him, candour required some notice of this remarkable and pertinent passage, Deut. xiii. 1—3. How had Christ been proved to “deserve death,” under the law referred to by Mr Locke? What “thing had he spoken, in the name of the Lord, that had not followed, nor come to pass?” What prediction or miracle of his had failed? His miracles were unquestioned, even of the Pharisees. (See note L.)

Vol. vi. 80.

Deut. xviii.
22.

they could believe the reality of his mighty works, and yet doubt the truth of his pretensions; could acknowledge that he “cast out devils,” and yet reproach him, that he “cast them out, not by the Spirit of God,” “but by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils.” So long as he, aware of their ignorance and prejudices touching the true nature of the Messiah, and willing to avoid their violence until he should have fulfilled the purposes of his ministry, withheld, or but obscurely put forth the assertion of his divinity, the feeling of the many was of “wonder at his gracious words;” the confession even of the officers of the chief priests, “Never man spake like this man;” their rulers could reason, “Thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him:” many of the people said, “Of a truth this is the prophet;” others said, “This is the *Christ*,” they owned him, without fear or scruple¹, for the promised “Son of David:” they

Matt. xii.
24, 28.

Luke iv. 22.

John vii. 46.

John iii. 2.

John vii.
40, 41.

See Luke

vii. 16.

John vi. 14,
&c.

John xii. 19,

42; ii. 23;

comp. ix.

22.

¹ The Jews were ready, upon every occasion of his miracles (one of the expected tests of the Messiah), to acknowledge him as such; so that the Pharisees complained that “*the world* was gone after him.” All such expressions as, “believing on him,” or “in his name,” or “confessing him,” imply, at the least, the owning him for the *Messiah*. This is admitted by Mr Locke, (Works, vi. 51, 52).

Some who *hesitated* to receive him for the Messiah, did not ground their reluctance on any impropriety, or illegality, of so regarding him; but on the supposed absence in him of some predicted characteristic of

John vii. 41.

this personage; as, “Shall Christ come out of *Galilee*?” From his having resided so long there, some supposed it to be the place of his birth, contrary to the prophecy of Micah, that Christ should be born at “*Bethlehem*,” with which they were well acquainted.

Mic. v. 2.

John vii. 42.

Matt. ii. 5.

Matt. ix. 27;

xxi. 9, 11.

Matt. xxi.

16.

Luke xix. 40.

“Jesus, thou Son of David,” was a frequent and unrebuked confession of him in this character. Nor did he disclaim it. When the Pharisees at length rebuked him for allowing it, he did not think it necessary to use any reserve, but reproached them for *withholding* it.

would have “taken him by force to make him a king”—to place him on the throne of David, of which the Messiah was destined, as they hoped, to renew the temporal glory. It was no blasphemy^g in their law, to claim to be “sent from God;” for the multitude, as they “counted John,” so they “took Jesus, for a prophet;” none, to claim to be “that prophet;” for they expected him to be of their brethren, and believed, first John, and then Jesus, to be him. Six times, in one address, and to captious hearers, did he assert his divine *office*, unrebuked. During his whole ministry it was never objected to him as an offence, that he made himself *the Christ*. While he was understood simply to assume this character, he met with no interruption^h: the proof of his mission was complete in his miracles, so that “of the chief rulers many believed² on him.”

^a John vi. 14, 15.

^g See note D.

^g Matt. xiv. 5; xxi. 26.

^h John i. 19, 21. Luke iii. 15.

John v.

^h See note E.

John xii. 42.

Thus his claim to be the *Messiah* was for awhile favourably received. It must, then, have been some other which gave offence, and brought this glad persuasion into doubt. It was when he taught that he “came down from heaven,” that many of the *very same* people, perceiving him to intend a real, personal descent, and hence a pre-existence in heaven, and so a divine nature, “murmured,” and shortly after “sought to *kill* him.” Even of his habitual disciples—of those who had long followed him as the *Christ*—some, when they heard this, “went back, and walked no more with him;” seeing in the impiety of this *further* pretension, as they saw it to be (or

John vi. 33, 35, 38.

John vi. 41; comp. vi. 14; vii. 1.

John vi. 60, 66.

² i. e. owned him *for the Messiah*. See p. 88, note 1.

why before pleased, and now only offended), an *appointed* proof that he was not of God. And though he well knew the cause of their desertion of him, and of their consequent loss of salvation, he neither recalled his saying, nor pleaded a meaning other than that at which they stumbled. That they thus construed his language, is shewn not only by their murmurs, but by the argument with which they met his assertion; “Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose *father and mother* we know? How is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?” An earthly parentage might seem to disprove a heavenly *origin*, but could not be thought an objection to a mere *mission* from above.

Deut. xiii. 1
—3.

John vi. 42.

† See Serm.
ii. note I.
John viii.
58, 59.
Mark ii. 5.
Matt. ix. 2.
John v. 17;
x. 36.

John x. 30,
38.

Matt. ix. 3.
Mark ii. 7.

Whenever, at intervals suited to his wise purpose of unfolding *gradually* an unexpected, and, as he well knew, an offensive doctrine, he by intelligible hints gave notice of his divine nature; as when he announced his existence “before Abraham¹,” when he “forgave sins;” when he justified his healing on the sabbath-day by the example of God, saying, “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work” (claiming a like authority); when he said, “I am the Son of God;” “I and my Father are one;” “The Father is in me, and I in him”—intimating an equality with God by the mere reciprocity;—on such occasions, they who had tranquilly listened to him as the *Messiah*, straightway taxed him with “blasphemy,” because that, “being a man¹, he *made himself God*,” they

¹ It is impossible that “making himself God,” can here intend any thing else than claiming the *divine nature*. Any *metaphorical* sense of the word “God,” such as that, “being a man, he made himself a *prophet*,

“sought to take him, that they might put him to death:” then “took they up stones to stone him;” all in supposed obedience to their law, as “speaking in the name of another God.” And this different treatment of him, according to the character he was understood to affect, was not exhibited *once* only^k, or by one *body*, or one *class*, of persons; but at sundry times, and by divers companies and ranks. Men of different views, capacities, and degrees of knowledge—the unlettered and the scribe, the Sadducee and the Pharisee—took umbrage at him on the *same ground*. Yet they looked for, and ardently desired, one who should expel their hateful oppressors, and restore their national glory. They could not, and did not, expect him to be *born* a king. Many of their deliverers had been of mean origin, and prophecy spake of lowly circumstances in their promised deliverer. Our Lord’s humble birth, therefore, was no obstacle to their belief in him; as is further proved by their momentary hope in John, who was of like² parentage and condition. And his works evinced a power mightier than the mightiest of men, qualifying him for any earthly triumph. There must, then, have been some strong ground for rejecting one, marked out by so many signs for the “expectation of Israel.” It could not be found in his claim to *be* so; for this fell in with their hope and eager desire. He had given no

John viii.
59; x. 31,
33, 39.

Dent. xiii. 5;
comp. xviii.
26.

^k See note
F.

Luke iii. 15.

or a *servant of God*,” would render the charge absurd; there being no proper inconsistency between the characters of “man,” and “prophet,” or “servant of God.”

² Yet Mr Locke says, that “none of the Jews could have borne to hear of such a pretension in the *son of a carpenter*.” Vol. vi. p. 82.

sufficient reason for doubt on this head, and still less for destroying him; save in the pretension to be *God*. There is no appearance of any other offence, by which to account for their conduct.

They might not, perhaps, have been unwilling to allow him, in a metaphorical sense not altogether unknown¹ in their Scriptures, the mere *title* of "Son of God." Remembered prophecies which warned of something extraordinary touching the birth of the Messiah, and the voice from heaven at his baptism, and "the record that John bare of him," might seem to them to justify its adoption, in any purport consistent with the mere nature of man. If then, when he, whom they gladly hailed as the object of these inspired notices with "Hosannah to the Son of David," intimated in *other* language his alliance to God as his Father, they broke out into indignation, and cried out for his death; it is clear that they must have interpreted his pretension, not in this figurative and harmless meaning, but in one new and loftier, strict and most offensive. They "sought to kill him," because they well understood him to say "God was his Father," in such a sense as to "make himself equal with God;" as the Evangelist expressly tells us. They regarded him as a "setter-forth of strange gods," as was afterwards said of his apostle, because "he preached Jesus^m;" Jesus, then, as an object of divine worship, after this his own doctrine.

¹ See Serm.
I. note H.
See Wilson,
p. 59.
Ps. ii. 7.
Isa. vii. 14;
liii. 8.
Matt. iii. 17.
John i. 34.

Matt. xxi. 9,
15.

John v. 18.

Acts xvii. 18.

^m See note
G.

Wilson, ch.
ii.
Stillingfl.
vol. III. 350.

For *this* cause, of arrogating to himself the divine nature, was he at length "by wicked hands crucified and slain." It was touching *this* offence that, before

Caiaphas and their own tribunal, the Pharisees in vain sought legal evidence against him (for they could have been at no loss for witnesses of his assuming to be the Christⁿ, which he had often done, even before themselves, and with the assent of many of them). It was touching *this* claim, that, in default of sufficient^o proof, they solemnly appealed to himself, “the high priest adjuring him by the living God to tell them whether he were the Christ, the *Son of God*.” And now, “knowing that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father,” having filled up the appointed measure of his ministry, he “witnessed a good confession,” for which he had been preparing the way, and which he thought worthy to be sealed with his blood. He answered, “Thou hast said;” or, as St Mark more explicitly renders this customary form of assent, “I am;” plainly avowing the doctrine imputed to him: and in further and more circumstantial assertion of his divine nature, bidding them expect open evidence of it, when they should “see him sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven”—in the proper majesty of him who “sitteth upon the water-floods,” and “in his excellency rideth on the sky.” Then, as when Stephen saw and proclaimed this glory; as on every occasion which could be regarded as bringing in question the absolute unity of God; they gave way, and outward expression, to religious horror, as hearing what it was not lawful to utter, or to listen to. Then did the “high priest rend¹ his clothes;” then cried

ⁿ See note H.

John viii.

24, 25; x.

24, 25; xii.

42.

Matt. xxi.

16.

Luke xix.

40.

^o See note I.

Matt. xxvi.

63.

Luke xxii.

70.

John xiii. 1.

1 Tim. vi. 13.

Matt. xxvi.

64.

Mark xiv.

62.

Matt. xxvi.

64.

Luke xxii.

69.

Mark xiv.

62.

Ps. xxix. 9.

Deut. xxxiii.

26.

¹ Why? This had never been done on any occasion of his professing to be the *Messiah*, or of his being proclaimed so by others. There

they, "What further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy:" then appealed they unto the council, "What think ye?"

See Deut.
xiii. 5.

Then did the council *judicially* pronounce, "He is guilty of death." In *one* sense only could this con-

^aSee note D. fession be "*blasphemy*^a;" in one sense only could the

words be thought a crime needing no proof, but carrying their sin with them. If in them he claimed to be simply the Christ, his offence could only be regarded as *imposture*: and the law, to whose forms they were scrupulously¹ adhering, had appointed a test of the truth. It was to be proved by the failure

Deut. xviii.
21, 22.

of some promised token, that "the Lord had not spoken by him." Only, if by them he did avouch his *divine nature*, and so speak in the name of "other

Deut. xiii. 2.

God" than the Lord, was his iniquity to their view already manifest; his pretension itself, his ascertained and sufficient guilt.

This distinction is further observable in the proceedings before Pilate. While in their first accusation of "saying that he is Christ, a king," it had been thought necessary to appeal to *facts*; "We found this

Lukexxiii.2;
comp. John
xviii. 33, 37.

was no sin in such a pretension, still less in merely hearkening to it. It must have been some *other* doctrine, which provoked this unusual and significant action. We may judge what that doctrine was, from a similar outbreak of feeling recorded in Acts xiv. 14, when Paul and Barnabas were about to be treated as "*gods*," by the ignorant barbarians. In Acts vii. 57, the occasion was similar to the present; and the outward action intended to testify a like horror.

¹ See how careful they were, just before, not to go beyond the law, when they, in this apprehension, rejected the evidence of the witnesses, though there was thus a risk of Jesus's escape, whom they were so eager to condemn; being well satisfied in *their own minds* of the real nature of his pretensions.

fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar," and "stirring up the people"—offences against the Roman supremacy; it was deemed enough in the second arraignment (which was substituted when, upon Christ's explanation that "his kingdom was not of this world," Pilate made light of the first), simply to allege what he had *spoken*, and to refer to the penalty of their own divine code, of which his words were a breach; "We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself (no longer 'Christ a king,' but) the *Son of God*." If the Jews had regarded these pretensions as identical, there could have been no motive for departing from their first language; especially before a *Roman* judge, whom they could not expect to understand in the same light words so differing in their direct and obvious purport. They would not have risked to perplex Pilate and give him a handle against them, by changing the form of accusation, the offence imputed remaining the same. They altered the terms of their indictment, because they would vary its tenor. The crime now objected to him was (as it bore upon the face of it) *blasphemy*; not, as before, *imposture* and *sedition*. Pilate at once perceived the different character of the allegation, and hence, it is expressly said, "was the more afraid;" fearing on the one hand lest, as haply his wife's message helped to suggest, Jesus might be, what he was *now* charged with assuming (no strange notion to a *heathen*); and, on the other, dreading the violence of the Jews, on a question affecting the *honour of their God*. Therefore, having in the former instance interrogated him as to his *political* pre-

John xviii.
36, 38.

John xix. 7.

John xix. 8.
Matt. xxvii.
19.

tensions, asking, “Art thou a *king*?” agreeably to the nature of the original impeachment, which concerned his claim to be *the Christ*; he now formally “returned to the judgment hall,” as for a new investigation, and straightway questioned him of his *parentage*; “Whence¹ art thou?” i. e. of what origin and lineage? Who is thy *Father*? shewing clearly his view of the far other grievance objected to him in the charge, that he “made himself the *Son of God*.”

That the question of the high priest, “Art thou the Son of God?” differs in meaning from that other, “Art thou the Christ?” is to be further gathered, not only from our Lord’s unlike reception of them, disregarding the one, and replying frankly to the other^r; but from the fact, that the description of his future condition, which they clamorously condemned, contained no acknowledgment to *their* minds of being *the Christ*. To their view, this title denoted a *human* conqueror, who should “*at this time* restore again the kingdom to Israel.” A promise of *present* earthly triumph, would have been an intelligible avowal of this character. But the prediction of distant and heavenly glory was beside their question, if by the “Son of God” they intended nothing

Luke xxii.
67, 70.
^r See note
K.

Acts i. 6.
Luke xxiv.
21.

¹ “Whence art thou?” (πόθεν εἶ σὺ;) Compare John vii. 27. “No one knoweth *whence he is*.” These words could not relate to the *place* of his birth, which everybody knew to be *Bethlehem*. (Compare Matt. ii. 5. John vii. 42.) They refer to his *extraction*, about which there was a mystery. (See Isaiah liii. 8: “Who shall declare his generation?” and Isaiah vii. 14; where it is promised that he should be “*born of a virgin*.”) The same expression is found in 2 Sam. i. 13, where the answer is; “I am *the son* of a stranger.” See Dodd’s Bible, on John xix. 8. and vii. 27; and Wilson, p. 58.

further than the *Messiah*. It had no relation to earthly sovereignty; it was a reference to a *divine existence*. Hence their reception of it, as a confession of the very guilt of which they were seeking proof, shews (as well as the horror which they expressed) what the suspected guilt was, and what the drift of their interrogatory.

Nor could the chief priests and Pharisees have so readily "persuaded the people" (whose tumultuary opposition to his arrest they had so recently apprehended, through the general persuasion of his being the Christ) "to destroy Jesus," merely because he had owned himself to be so. These could not consider it criminal to avouch what it had been innocent for them to believe, and they still ardently desired to find true. It was only through a supposed disproof of this claim by his admission of a far other pretension, which, in common with his accusers, they abhorred as "blasphemy," that they could so suddenly be brought to clamour for his crucifixion. Fickle as the multitude is wont to be, some appeal to their passions or prejudices was needed, to effect this sudden revolution in their feelings. And there is no trace of any other ground of such an appeal than this, of his "making himself God."

Matt. xxvii.
20.
Matt. xxvi.
3-5.

John x. 33.

It is a clear consequence, from all these considerations, that the pretensions of Jesus were well understood by his enemies to be two; viz. that he was "the Messiah," and also, and in a strict and proper sense, the "Son of God." They were continually treated by them as two; as two, when he taught, and was in the one character patiently borne with, and of

Mark xii. 37. many "heard gladly," and in the other murderously assaulted; as two, when questioned by the high priest; Luke xxii. 67, 70. as two, when accused before Pilate; as two, when the John xviii. 33; xix. 7. people now hailed him with loud hosannahs, and shortly after cried out for his death; and, we may add, as two, Matt. xxi. 9; xxvii. 22. when cast in his teeth on the cross¹. Matt. xxvii. 42, 43.

That this is a just view of the construction put by the unbelieving Jews on these titles, and on the pretensions of our Lord intimated by them, may be further ascertained from a passage which also deserves notice, as seeming, at first sight, to purport his disavowal of the loftier claim.

John x. 30. When he had said, "I and my Father are one,"
 * See note D. they charged him with "blasphemy^s," because that by these words, as they urged, and consequently as John x. 33. they understood him, "being a man, he *made himself God*:" and so justified to him out of their law their attempt to put him to death. He referred them to that law, in which the rulers of God's people are figuratively called gods, as his vice-gerents; and thus Ps. lxxxii. 6. Exod. xxii. 28; vii. 1, 2. exposed their rash injustice in condemning him, to whom they were not prepared to deny even a higher mission, without first making sure that his language implied more: "Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he call them gods to whom the John x. 34—36.

¹ The different manner of taunting him with these two pretensions, marks a distinction between them, in the minds of the "chief priests, and scribes, and elders." In allusion to the first, they said; "If thou be the *king of Israel*"—a well known title of the Messiah, and requiring no explanation. Then they added; "He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for *he said*, I am the *Son of God*." This remark shews that they were not familiar with the latter phrase; that it was one assumed by him, and *thus only* known to them.

word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken (its authority be set aside); say ye of him, whom the *Father hath sanctified and sent into the world*, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?"

The drift of this remonstrance evidently is, that as the "sanctified of the Father" (i. e. the anointed—*the Christ*;) he might boast to be the Son of God, in a sense to which they could not object, because the like had been applied to others with a less sacred character; whereas they had condemned him for so representing himself, on a *mere presumption* that he intended *more* by it. They did not reply, that to "make himself *the Christ*" was the offence charged to him; they did not dispute that they had supposed him to mean *more*—viz. to "make himself *God*." They were abashed and silent, thus admitting for true the whole ground of his expostulation².

But his intention had been to reprove their headiness, not to disclaim the meaning imputed to him. Having shewn that they had accused him of "making himself God," without sufficient evidence, he then taxed them with resisting the sufficient evidence he had given them, of his *being truly so*: "If I do not

John x. 37,
38.

² His reasoning is simply this: 'They who held a commission from God, are on this ground called "gods," in Scripture. Therefore it can be no sin in me, whom you do not deny to be "the Messiah," to call myself "the Son of God," in a like sense: and you have not had the candour to enquire whether I mean *more*.'

It is clear that *their charge* of "making himself God," implied his claiming the *divine nature*: for it would have been nothing strange or inconsistent, that, "being a *man*, he should make himself a *prophet*," or a *servant* of God: for such were necessarily *men*; and so also "*the Messiah*," in *their* view. This has already been remarked, p. 90, note.

the works of my Father, believe me not; but if I do, though ye believe not me, believe *the works*, that ye may know and believe that the *Father is in me*, and *I in him*." His argument is, that, doing what the Father does, they should own him, after his profession, for what the Father is. It is an appeal to his omnipotence, in proof of his truth and Godhead. They now saw that he did not mean to disavow, but to substantiate, the offensive claim. Therefore "they sought again to take him." The acknowledgment of a *merely human* nature would have at once removed the cause of their wrath. But he left them convinced that he assumed *to be God*, "escaping out of their hand" by an exercise of that divine power, to which he had referred them.

John x. 39.
"again," see
v. 31, and
there, see
viii. 59.

His *being the Christ* is obviously the plea which our Lord puts forward as sufficient, in their sight, to justify his making himself the "Son of God," in a sense which, as far as they had yet ascertained, might be all that he intended by this relation. Since he urged this character as his vindication, it could not be the assumption of it which constituted the offence from which he was to clear himself. It must have been for making himself something *other* than the Christ, and *more than this*, at which they had taken umbrage. What could this higher pretension be, intimated in the words, "*making himself God*," except that which is *properly* expressed by them? The *metaphorical* sense, of "a *mission* from God" as the Messiah, is shewn to be harmless and undisputed, and not that objected to him by the Jews.

It is, then, a just inference from this transaction,

that the Jews would have permitted Jesus to go unrebuked, in the character of *the Messiah*, had he pretended to no more; that they understood him, by his manner of professing to be the *Son of God*, and his language generally, to insinuate in addition his *divine nature*; and that, not expecting a Messiah in such nature, they concluded him to be an impostor for affecting it; and so would have put him to death as a blasphemer against the majesty of God, for arrogating that majesty to himself.

Mr Locke^t, indeed, dissents from the conclusion at which we thus arrive on such various grounds, as to the views of the unbelieving Jews touching the pretensions of our Lord, intimated in the character of the “Son of God.” In the hope of smoothing the way for the reception of Christianity by *Deists*, he would reduce the creed necessary for a *first* admission to its privileges, to a mere belief in Jesus as the promised Messiah. Hence he must needs make appear, that Jesus himself imposed no larger confession for this end, and was so understood of all. And seeing he continually gave himself out also for the *Son of God*, and was acknowledged as such by some, and persecuted on this score by others; Mr Locke, to obviate this fact seemingly so fatal to his scheme, contends, that to be the “Son of God,” and to be the “Messiah,” were but different expressions for the same thing. His theory absolutely depending on the truth of this identity, it is the aim of a great portion of his “Reasonableness of Christianity,” to establish, that at the time of our Lord’s advent, “the Son of God was the known title of the Mes-

^tSee note
L.

siah amongst the Jews—"a common signification"—"so familiar a compellation of the Messiah, who was then so much expected and talked of, that the Romans, who lived amongst them, had learned it." He labours to make good this assertion by many references to Scripture. Yet, strange to say, of all the examples he adduces, *not one* is strictly in point. Not one instance does he bring of the application of this title of "Son of God" to their "*much talked of Messiah*," by any individual of that whole people, in whose mouths he proposes to prove it, in that sense and application, trite as a "household word."

For it answers neither the assertion nor the aim of Mr Locke, to shew that this character was *assumed by Jesus* concurrently with that of the Messiah, and that, *on this account*, the title was addressed to *him personally*. For this would throw us upon him for its interpretation, and make the confession of him in this character the confession of what *he taught by it*. That Jesus claimed, and was acknowledged by this title, is the very fact which stands in Mr Locke's way, and for which he professes to account. And the explanation he alleges, is, the *previous* familiarity of the Jews with it, as a characteristic of the *Messiah of their hope*—"a mere synonyme"—so that whoever should take it to himself would be at once regarded as giving himself out for the Messiah, as they expected him, and *nothing more*. No example of the use of this title, save with respect to the *Messiah*, as *distinct from Jesus*, can properly avail to Mr Locke's argument.

Now Scripture supplies not *one solitary* case of

such application of this title; insomuch that Mr Locke, after culling out the most favourable instances to confirm his position, that “the Son of God was a form of speech then used among the Jews to signify the Messiah,” viz. “the Baptist, Nathanael, Peter, Martha, the Sanhedrim, the Centurion¹”—is compelled^{vol. vi. 370, 1.} to rest satisfied with this conclusion: “Here are Jews, heathens, friends, enemies, men, women, believers, unbelievers, all indifferently use this phrase of the Son of God, and apply it to JESUS;” not to the *Messiah*, as they were required to exemplify, but to *Jesus personally*; which is the very admitted usage to be explained.

I say nothing of the rhetorical exaggeration, little suited, in an enquiry of such grave importance, to the general candour of the writer, by which six individuals (if for “the sanhedrim,” we substitute the “high priest”) are exhibited under the guise and muster of a mixed host. I am content with the remark, that, few or many, not one of them, in truth, speaks to the question at issue. They are witnesses, every one of them, to the *pretensions of Jesus*,—not to the *previous* employment of this title by the Jews, to designate the object of their hope.

How these persons, and others, came to speak of Jesus, and some to *receive* him, in this character, has already been explained. In agreement with ancient revelation, which had hinted, in many ways, a divine Messiah (a fact not to have been left unnoticed by

¹ There is also the example of his disciples, when he came to them “walking on the sea.” See Sermon II. p. 64.

Mr Locke), the Almighty Father, by a voice from heaven at his baptism, proclaimed Jesus for his “be-
Matt. iii. 16, 17.
 John i. 32—34. loved Son;” designating his person by the descent of the Holy Spirit upon him, under such a material symbol as to be evident to human vision. John heard and saw; and, thus instructed, as well as by internal inspiration, “bare record that this is the *Son of God.*” Jesus, from the beginning of his ministry, pointedly professed this character, and continually and variously illustrated its lofty signification, as his disciples were able to bear the unexpected and difficult truth. Knowing God for true, and convinced by his miracles and holiness and wisdom, that Jesus was so, many acknowledged him by this description, because it was thus applied to him, and claimed by him, perhaps *before they understood its full import*; expecting his instruction, and waiting on his ministry that they might receive it: just as they owned him for the *Messiah*, long before they knew the true scope of *this* name, and sought light upon it from his preaching. From him also, many who were blinded by early prejudice, learned the title and its *meaning in his use*, not believing, but condemning and persecuting him as a *blasphemer*, for assuming it; as we have amply shewn. To such origin we may reasonably ascribe the knowledge of it, in every
Locke, vi. 57, 58, 66, 67.
 Horsley, 238, 9; also note L. person brought forward by Mr Locke. And none, who could thus derive acquaintance with it, can be competent to make good his assertion of its *previous* currency, or to give validity to his conclusion.

Not only is Mr Locke thus shewn to be destitute of one effectual support to his oft-repeated propo-

^u See note M.

sition, that the Son of God was a phrase that among the Jews, in our Saviour's time, was used for the Messiah;" Scripture supplies a strong presumptive proof of the general ignorance of it, in this light. The evangelists record many occasions, in which this people make mention of their expected deliverer, and by every variety of description, *save and except this alone*. When John was enquired of, "Who art thou?" he confessed, I am not *the Christ*." The surmise, touching our Lord, caused by his mighty works, was repeatedly expressed under the same title. The question of John's disciples to Jesus was, "Art thou he that should come?" The persuasion of the multitude is said to have been, that he was "that prophet that should come into the world." In other places, the periphrase employed is, the "king," or the "consolation of Israel;" the "Lord's Christ;" "he of whom Moses did write;" the "day-spring from on high;" "he who should redeem Israel;" "Christ, the Saviour of the world;" the "King that cometh in the name of the Lord." The cry of the afflicted suppliants was addressed to the "*Son of David*;" though the power to which they looked for relief might well have suggested that of "*Son of God*," had it been known to them. The hosannahs of the multitude owned him for the Messiah, by the same title. There are other examples, too many for enumeration here: but the appellation represented to be so popular, has *nowhere place among them*. And there is a more direct proof of its being *absolutely unknown*, in its application to the *Messiah*, even to the Pharisees. When Jesus referred them back to the

vol. vi. 172.

John i. 19,
20.

John iv. 29;
vii. 31, 41.

Luke vii.
19.

John vi. 14.

John xii. 13.
Luke ii. 25,
26.
John i. 45.

Luke i. 78;
xxiv. 21.

John iv. 42.

Luke xix.
38.

Matt. ix. 27.

Matt. xxi. 9.

John iii. 28;
iv. 25, 29;
vii. 26, 27;
ix. 22; x.
24; xii. 34;
Matt. ii. 4;
xii. 23; xv.
22; xx. 30;
Mark x. 47,
48; Luke iii.
15; xviii. 38,
39.

Scriptures, for some other descent of this personage, besides that of "David," which they had assigned in answer to the question, "What think ye of Christ, whose son is he?" the title of "Son of God" afforded so apposite a reply, that it is impossible to believe they would have failed to put it forward, had they been aware of its being appropriated to him, *in any sense*; to avoid the mortifying imputation of ignorance of the law, to which their silence openly subjected them.

The truth then is, that, so far from being "a familiar compellation of the Messiah," the Son of God was not his expected *title*, even to those few who might look for him in an exalted *nature*. Both the disciples of Jesus and his enemies learned it from himself (after the voice from heaven, and the record of John), and from himself, its *meaning*. Moreover, they agreed entirely in the interpretation of it, derived from him; but in a sense far other than that which Mr Locke supposes. *Both* came to understand by it, that he "*made himself God*." This we have seen to be at length the creed and the doctrine of the evangelists and apostles. And the former expressly ascribe the same view of his pretensions to his *enemies*, as the motive of their hostility, in *these very words*, that he "made himself God;" which Mr Locke unaccountably passes over, when alleging other portions of the angry colloquy of which they form a part, in support of his own contrary theory, which they so manifestly overthrow. The *disciples* of Jesus received and worshipped him in the character intimated by the title of "Son of God;" his *enemies* rejected him

Wilson, 59,
60.

John x. 33.

Vol. vi. 18.

and crucified him for affecting it, as “blasphemously” pretending to the *divine nature*. These conclusions Mr Locke in vain seeks to invalidate.

To return to our general argument. The sin of the Jews was, that they listened to their prejudices and passions, rather than, in an honest heart, search the Scriptures for the truth concerning the Messiah; rather than weigh the evidence of our Lord’s miracles, of his piety, and blameless life. They desired one *great on earth*, trusting to share his greatness: and they were deaf to every truth that falsified this hope. And without “loving the Lord their God” in their hearts, they dreaded to forfeit his promised deliverance, after the example of their forefathers ill understood, by “running after another god.” Hence they Ps. xvi. 4. had eyes and saw not, ears and heard not, and hearts that would not understand. “The god of this world 2 Cor. iv. 4. blinded the minds of them which did not believe, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the *image of God*, should shine unto them.” Having “their affections set on things on the earth,” they gave no heed to those heavenly and spiritual things, which he came to reveal unto them. Hence they obstinately persisted, in despite of all witness, to regard him as *falsely* assuming a divine character, and to look upon it as at once their duty and their interest, to put him to death. In this persuasion, they “rejected Luke vii. 30. the counsel of God against themselves:” they “killed Acts iii. 15. the Prince of life.”

While he justly condemned the perverseness of their error, he yet acknowledged the sincerity of it. He, as his apostle after him, “wot that through *ignorance* Acts iii. 17.

they did it." Accordingly, he prayed for them in these remarkable words, "Father, forgive them; they *know not what¹ they do.*" He was not herein interceding for them in a mere spirit of clemency, as Stephen under a like violence, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge;" but also alleging a real ground in extenuation of their guilt. It was the application to them of his general assertion, "No man knoweth who the Son is but the Father," i. e. fully comprehendeth his true nature and divine *filiation*; for of his divine *mission* as "the Christ," *many* were convinced. His plea was something akin to that of Paul, in reference to unbelieving Israel, in his day; "I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not *according to knowledge.*" Hence his "heart's desire and prayer to God for them was, that they might be saved;" as, after him, that of his apostle. Paul himself had once ranked with the perverse, and thus he describes his discarded error; "I was zealous towards God, as ye are all this day:" "I verily thought with myself that I *ought* to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth," and "I persecuted this way unto the *death.*" These prejudices illustrate those of Christ's judges, and more-over helped to fulfil his prediction, that "It should be with the disciple as with the master:" "The time cometh, that whosoever *killeth* you will think that he *doeth God service.*" Of all which blind hostility he assigns beforehand one common cause; "These things will they do, because they have not known

1 Tim. i. 13.

¹ St Paul ascribes his own pardon to this very consideration.

the Father^x nor me.” What he imputes to them throughout, is, ignorance of his true relation of Son to the Father; and that on this account they put him to death, in supposed obedience to their law, as falsely professing in himself the nature of God; and would so treat his disciples², preaching this doctrine, on the same ground. His charge against them is, of perverse error touching his true Deity; and so is a further testimony to this truth which they overlooked.

John xvi. 3.
^x See note N.

Thus it appears from the whole conduct of the *unbelieving* Jews—from the nature of their objections to our Lord’s doctrine, and of their treatment of him on many occasions, especially that of his trial, as well as from the tenour of his replies—that to *their* view, he did unquestionably teach that he was *truly God*. And he knew their thoughts, he heard their accusations, he foresaw the consequences: yet he denied no part of their charge; he retracted nothing of the claim which gave offence. Such, then, as they regarded it, must have been the real purport of his language. Had they mistaken his meaning, truth and compassion, the distinguishing graces of his character, would have moved him to set them right. He would have undeceived^y them, and declared his mere manhood, out of reverence to God, who would have been dishonoured by his imputed pretension, if untrue; and that he might remove a stumbling-block out of their way, whom he ardently desired to bring into his fold; and hold up to them, as well as

^y Serm. i.
note G.

Luke xiii.
34.

² This was the offence of Stephen, and the cause of his martyrdom. Acts vii. 56
See Horsley’s 12th Letter to Priestley. —59.

Matt. xxvii.
54.

to his disciples in all times, a right faith and worship. But he in nought explained away, or qualified, the various expressions, by which he was understood to assert for himself the fulness of the divine majesty. He was aware of, and acquiesced in, the construction put upon them. For thus teaching, he was content to be put to death. He suffered in attestation of this doctrine, that “truly he was the Son of God.” As *God*, then, he must have intended to be received; as *God*, to be worshipped in all ages throughout all the world, whithersoever “the everlasting Gospel” should come. *God*, therefore, he assuredly is. SO HE PREACHED, AND SO WE BELIEVE.

Having proposed to lay before you the testimony of the Scriptures only, to the divinity of Christ, as being alone of authority to establish the truth; it may be thought that my subject is here brought to a close, by a statement, from them, of the original prophecies relating to his nature, and of his own doctrine; as well as of the consentient construction put upon his language by all who heard it, whether friends or foes.

But it may be allowed, and not unuseful, to add a brief notice of the views of those, who were contemporaneous with the apostles, or followed quickly upon their time. *That* is the real doctrine of Scripture, which was the meaning of its authors. And some light is undoubtedly to be thrown upon that meaning, if we can ascertain how their language was understood by those to whom it was at first addressed; who, in any doubt, had opportunity of appealing for further instruction to them, or to those who had

conversed familiarly with them. And, for some time, the traditional opinions of the great body of the disciples, of different nations and languages, recorded by successive teachers, or otherwise ascertained, cannot be without value¹. However weak the reasoning of individual writers, left to their natural gifts, or however fanciful their inferences or illustrations; the knowledge of the real sense of Scripture, as received throughout the universal Church, at least upon all its leading doctrines, and in a broad and general view, was sure to be accurately preserved, seeing how much all men's minds were intent upon them. As it would have *detracted* something from our confidence in our own interpretation of the Gospel, could it be shewn to be at variance with that of the generality of those, who received the Word from its first preachers, or with only a short intermediate transmission; so it must tend to *confirm* our faith, to find it in agreement with that of the great body of the disciples of the evangelists and apostles, and of those who were, in succession, duly commissioned to hand down their doctrines. If we possessed no such testimony, our creed would rest secure on the clear, natural sense of God's word. But it is no disparagement to this supreme authority, to derive some satisfaction from the uniform opinions, *grounded upon it*, of the Church of Christ in the earliest times, and in the various communities and tongues in which the Gospel was rapidly circulated.

¹ See Waterland, vol. v. ch. viii., upon the "Use and value of ecclesiastical antiquity with respect to controversies of faith."

Now that our Lord was immediately, generally, and uninterruptedly, regarded and worshipped by Christians, as *God*, on the strength of the very evidence which has been adduced, is clearly established¹ in many ways. This was the faith imputed to the Church at large, by writers following close upon the times of the apostles, Pagan² as well as Christian, and uncontradicted by any credible contemporary authority. The reproach cast upon the followers of the new religion, by its *Jewish* enemies, was of *idolatry*, for worshipping *a man* as God. The reply of the apologists was not a *denial* of the worship,

¹ For proof of this assertion, see Bull's three treatises on the Trinity, so often referred to; Berriman's "Historical Account of the Controversies of the Church, concerning the Doctrine of the Trinity;" Bingham's Orig. Eccles. B. XIII. ch. ii.; Stillingfleet, Disc. on the Trinity, ch. ix.; Mr Wilson's book, already often mentioned, which contains a clear and succinct account; Waterland, vol. II., Sermon VIII. and vol. V. ch. vi.; Dr Whitby's Tract; and Wall's Hist. of Inf. Bapt. V. II. ch. ix.

Athanasius openly challenged the *Arians* to produce a single ancient writer of credit, in support of their opinions. And, to shew that this was not an idle boast, the Emperor Theodosius, wishing to put an end to the controversy with them, proposed a conference of the leaders on both sides, and that they should abide by what could be shewn to have been the doctrine of the *early Fathers*. But the *Arians* declined to abide by this test. Bull, D. F. N. Epil. Op. Univ.

Socinus seems to have admitted that the sentiments of the *ancient Fathers and Councils of the Church* were on the side of the *received doctrine*, and to have piqued himself upon being the *first* to discover the true sense of Scripture, at the end of more than 1500 years! (See Tillotson, Sermon. II. on John i. 14; and Whitby's Preface to his Tract.)

² See Wilson, ch. vi.—xiii.; xv.—xviii.; xxi.—xxiii.; Bull, D. F. N. Sect. II. c. iv. n. 11; and Pr. et Ap. Tr. c. iv.; Berriman, (pp. 80—82.)

The Emperor Julian, an avowed, virulent, and learned enemy, felt himself compelled to admit the general prevalence of this doctrine among Christians, even *prior* to the publication of *St John's Gospel*; so as to have been, as he takes the liberty of supposing, St John's motive for adopting the doctrine! See Berriman, p. 58, and Waterland, vol. V. 179—80.

but an assertion that he, whom they so honoured, never, even on earth, had been *man only*, but *also God*³. In consequence of their well-known creed, Christians were charged with inconsistency by the heathen (whom they called upon to renounce their *many gods*), for themselves deifying one laid in the grave; and were regarded as *polytheists*⁴ on account of their *own* worship, though as atheists, for their contempt of that of the pagans. As *polytheists*, too, they were reviled by the Jews⁵, who justified their rejection of Christianity (as their descendants⁶ do to this day) mainly on the ground of its supposed infringement of the unity of God, through the acknowledgment of the deity of his Son. To both the answer of the Christian advocates was the same; the confession of a belief in the divine nature of Christ, with an assertion of the unity of God: "We⁷ worship one God, the Father and Son." They were represented as tritheists⁸ by heretics, who assuredly knew, and by this title meant to impute, their real worship of both

³ Bishop of Lincoln's Justin, ch. ii. Bingham's Orig. Eccles. B. XIII. ch. ii.

⁴ Bingham's Orig. Eccl. B. XIII. c. ii. Lardner, iv. 281, from Athanasius. Waterland, III. 69, 70.

⁵ Bull, J. E. C. c. i. n. 8.

⁶ See Allix, p. 346, who says; "A learned Jew would laugh in the face of a Socinian, who would go about to persuade him that Jesus is not represented in the Gospel *as God*." It is the exhibition of this doctrine which is the ground of his enmity to the Gospel. Even Mahometans seem to have admitted that the Gospel ascribes a divine nature to Christ; but assert that Christ's *own* doctrine was corrupted herein by his historians. (Stillington's Pref. to his Disc. on the Trinity, near the end.)

⁷ The words of Origen. See Waterland, vol. III. 70. Berriman.

⁸ See Waterland, I. 271—2.

the Son and the Holy Spirit, as God. Further, the doctrine of the Trinity was at first the *sole*^a, and ever the *chief* matter of the creeds¹, used as preliminary tests of a right and necessary faith, in the baptism of converts, in every quarter of the Christian world; after the commandment of our Lord in the text, and the pattern and instruction of the apostles, in obedience thereto. Moreover, it is witnessed in early doxologies and liturgies². Hymns³, too, were from the very first sung to Christ, "*as God*," after the written precept of one apostle: and prayers⁴ universally offered to him, as such, after the example and lessons of all of them.

^a See Serm. iv. note K.

Eph. v. 19.

^b See note O.

^c See Serm. i. note K.

Not only the creed of the infant and growing Church, as thus manifested by various proofs, but the very *errors of early heresy*^b, tend to establish the original, and general reception of this doctrine, of Christ's divinity. Long before the death of the last of the apostles (as has been already noticed^c), a remnant of Gentilism, imperfectly discarded, introduced dissent. Some ill-instructed converts, attaching themselves exclusively to the many and clear assertions in Scripture, of the divine glory of the Redeemer; and not knowing how to reconcile, or else unwilling to believe, the union of

¹ See Waterland, v. ii. Serm. viii. vol. v. ch. vi. Bull, J. E. C. c. iv. v. vi. with Grabe's annotations. Stillingfleet's Disc. on the Trinity, ch. ix. Wall's Inf. Bapt. vol. ii. ch. ix.

² Bingham, Orig. Eccles. B. xiii. ch. ii. Stillingfleet, Disc. on the Trin. ch. ix. Bull. D. F. N. Sect. ii. c. iii. n. 6.

³ Bull, D. F. N. Sect. iii. c. ii. n. 5. J. E. C. c. vii. Appendix, n. 3. Wilson, 270—274. Bingham, Orig. Eccles. B. xiii. ch.

⁴ Bingham, as before. Whitby's Tract, ch. i. sect.

his heavenly nature with that of man; presumed to deny his real assumption of our flesh, and to pronounce his human body to have been a semblance only, a mere phantom. Against these pestilent heretics St John wrote. And had the fact been, that Christ possessed the nature of man *only*, it had assuredly been now distinctly declared; as at once the best contradiction of the error, which in *that case* they entertained, of his *deity*; and the best assertion of the truth which in any case they repudiated, of his *manhood*. But in no part of St John's writings, or elsewhere in Scripture, is there a single sentence, which, in its true purport, holds up Christ as *merely a human prophet*. On the contrary, while the evangelist, with clear and admitted reference to this heresy, severely condemns those who "confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh;" (i. e. who deny the true incarnation of his divine nature^d); he assiduously guards against the opposite error, of supposing him to have come *so only*, and to have been a *mere man*—by proclaiming, with distinct and manifold witness, that he was "in the beginning with God, and was God;" as has been abundantly shewn.

¹ John iv. 3.
² John 7.

^d See Serm.
i. note P.

John i. 1.
¹ John i. 1, 2.

Another and early, though somewhat later sect, equally impressed with the true and perfect Godhead of him who was "made flesh"—(who assumed the nature of man to that of the deity, in Christ Jesus)—sought to reconcile this clear doctrine of Scripture with the unity of God, by putting aside the many warrants of his *personality*, as *distinct from the Father*^e. Thus they allowed themselves to look upon

^e See Serm.
i. note O.
"Sabellians."

the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, as but *three names*, or *notions*, belonging to the *one Person* of God, according to the different offices which he condescended to perform in the scheme of man's salvation; that, with merely a variety of *title* and *operation*, he who *came* from heaven was also he who *sent*; he who *required* a ransom for man, was he who *paid* it; he who *exacted* an atonement and satisfaction for sin, himself *offered* it to himself, by dying on the cross. They who could put up with so strange a notion, in order to account for the asserted deity of the Saviour, must have been strongly convinced of the truth and importance of this doctrine.

Both of these sects agreed with the great body of Christians, in the interpretation of those passages of Scripture which magnify the nature of Christ; and were deemed heretics, only for rejecting *other* doctrines as clearly inculcated therein, and substituting their own unauthorised inventions. This is made clear, not only by the express testimony of those fathers of the primitive Church who confuted and condemned these errors, and by the successive additions made in consequence to the baptismal creed^f, in order to preserve the truth; but also by the very names given to them in reproach, descriptive of what was peculiar¹ in their tenets. Had their dissent from Christians at large consisted in asserting the divinity of Christ, this so important distinction would

^f See Serm.
iv. note K.

¹ For other instances of sects named after their *peculiar opinions*, see Berriman, 314—318.

have been made the foundation of their characteristic title. But both of them holding this doctrine in common with all Christians, the one sect were called "Docetæ," after their unwarranted belief of Christ's mere spectral and phantastic body; the other were stigmatized with the name of "Patri-passians," because, teaching the Father and the Son to be but nominally distinct, and virtually the same Person, it followed, as a consequence^g, that the *Father* was incarnate, and the *Father crucified*. ^g Serm. i. note O.

The Church was constantly watchful to maintain in all its purity that truth, on the belief of which salvation is declared to depend. All who, as time multiplied error, in any way brought into question the perfect divinity² of Christ, were at once authoritatively condemned, and at the same time pronounced to have forfeited the privileges and blessings of the gospel; as denying that faith which he solemnly made the condition of his mercy, in the injunction which closed his ministry on earth^h. This is abundantly manifest from the whole tenor of ecclesiastical history³. ^h See Serm. iv. note K.

With such a multiplicity and variety of consistent evidence, the candid and teachable student of divine truth, willing to receive it on the authority of him who revealed it, cannot but be satisfied. Cavils may be raised against a few texts. But the consent

² The first heretics (especially of *Gentile* origin) were those who denied the *human* nature of Christ. Their opinions have been already stated. See also Wilson, ch. xiii. and Berriman, ch. i.

³ See Waterland, vol. v. ch. iv. v. vi. Bull, J. E. C. Stillingfleet, Disc. on the Trinity, ch. iv. Berriman.

of so many and different forms of assertion, throughout the gospel, admits of no explanation, *but in the purpose of its great Author to teach us the doctrine, which is thus carefully, and copiously, and harmoniously presented.* And when it is further borne in mind, that the *Jews of old* had notions conformable to it, grounded on the dimmer light of their earlier and preparatory revelation; and that all who

John xiv. 6. heard the words of him who is the emphatic "*Truth*," whether believers or infidels, put upon them a like construction; and transmitted their agreeing interpretation, by an uninterrupted tradition, as a test of discipleship, and the basis of worship in the *Church*; and in the ranks of *infidelity*, as matter of scoff, and the very motive of disbelief; even heresy adding its witness, by its very perversions of the truth; we cannot but be satisfied that we have every evidence that reason requires, or could expect, from the known method of God's dealings with us. They who on such grounds acknowledge in their

John i. 1-3
—14.
Isai. ix. 6. Redeemer their Creator; and in the "Prince of Peace" the "Mighty God;" rest in safe reliance, that

2 Thess. ii. 13. he who came to save "through belief of the truth," would not so reveal himself as necessarily to mislead into fatal error; and that, "trusting in him, they shall never be ashamedⁱ."

ⁱ See note P.

The Scriptures, while proclaiming the unity of God, represent both the Father and the Son to be God, ascribing to them severally the same divine titles, attributes, and operations, and commanding for both the same divine worship. We, satisfied with their authority, and acknowledging none other,

assent to each of these propositions; reconciling them in the manner pointed out by, or most consistent with, the language in which they are delivered to us. We own the Father to be God, and the Son to be alike God, making no difference or inequality, where Scripture has made none. And while we regard them as *personally distinct*, as their very relation¹ implies, and the divine Word abundantly intimates; we believe them also to be *one*, by subsisting in *one and the same* infinite, immutable, and indivisible substance^k. Thus our faith is, that the Father and the Son, co-equal, co-eternal, con-substantial, are TWO PERSONS, BUT ONE GOD.

^kSee Serm. I. note B.

¹ A relation necessarily implies *two* subjects. Bull thus renders the reasoning of Origen, for the distinction of the Father and Son, intimated by their titles: "Ad hos dicendum primò, alium esse Filium a Patre; et quod necessariò Filius sit Patris Filius; et Pater, Filii sit Pater." D. F. N. Sect. ii. c. ix. n. 11.

SERMON IV.

MATTH. XXVIII. 19.

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

Heb. v. 9.

IT is a strange inconsistency of the human mind, that, after it has come to acknowledge, as revealed by God, that man was made by him, and received from him a law which might not be broken; that he did transgress, and so forfeited the hope held out to obedience; that God had pity on him, and provided a method of recovery from the evil; that he sent into the world the appointed "author of salvation" long foretold, authenticating his mission by the further evidence of miracles, and guiding his disciples, the hearers of his doctrines and eye-witnesses of his mighty works, to record both for our perpetual instruction;—it is a strange inconsistency, that any one should believe this chain of wonders to be unquestionably real, as vouched by the Word of God; and then find a difficulty in receiving what is taught, on the same divine authority, touching the *rank* of him who wrought this great redemption. It is irreconcilable with sound reason, that a man should stop here, and set up opinion against faith; his measure of possibility against the decree of inspiration: should abide by the conceits of his own understanding, exactly on the point upon which it is the most ignorant and insufficient; viz.

the properties of the *divine essence*^a. To my humble view, to accept all these facts and doctrines for true, as asserted in writings confessedly stamped with the seal of the Holy Spirit, and then to reject what is thus unfolded as to the *nature* of the Saviour, is, “to strain out a gnat, and swallow a camel;” to master the greater difficulty, and stagger at the less; to toil up a steep ascent on whose summit stands the temple of salvation, and refuse the last easy step, by which we may enter in and be at rest. The lesson of revelation to *me* seems in agreement with the natural apprehension, when it saith; “None can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him;” the vastness of the effect calls for a *divine* instrument. Still more, when it is taken into the account that the *whole race* stood in need of deliverance, the extent of the evil to be remedied, and the amount of sin to be expiated, shut out hope in any human merit or mediator; warn to “cease from man, whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of?” carry our hearts along with the prophet, when he exclaims to those who bring these good tidings; “Lift up your voice with strength, lift it up, be not afraid: say (of your Redeemer), Behold your *God!*”

^a See note A.

Matt. xxiii. 24.

Ps. xlix. 7.

Isai. ii. 22; comp. 1 Sam. ii. 25.

Isai. xl. 9. See Dodd's Bible, and Dr Knight, No. 534.

They who presume to question the doctrine of Christ's divine and uncreated nature, do not perhaps *avowedly*^b thus set up the prejudices of a feeble and narrow reason against the word of God; but professing to acknowledge the authority of Scripture, allege that they read, or understand it differently. But if they allow themselves, because of the difficulty

^b Note B.

of conceiving the *manner* in which the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are severally and equally divine, yet together one God, to seek for other than the true text, and the natural and grammatical interpretation of Scripture; and, rather than receive it in its plain and obvious purport, to prefer a forced and improbable construction of some passages which they let^c stand; and to alter or disallow others, which by no ingenuity of perversion can be wrested to a sense consonant with their preconceived views; then is it true, that they have departed from “the uprightness in which God made the mind of man, and have sought out many inventions.” They trust to themselves in a matter where reason, honestly consulted, would tell them of their incompetence, for that “man by wisdom knows not God;” his nature is, still more than his “judgments,” “unsearchable” by it, and than “his ways, past finding out.” They abide too, by their reason, in one only of its faculties—*imagination*: they reject, only because their *conception* is at fault. We, who in this, as in all that he has revealed, give implicit credence unto God, set not reason aside, but walk herein by its true light.

^c See note C.

Eccles. vii. 29.

1 Cor. i. 21.

Rom. xi. 33.

2 Tim. i. 12.

“We know whom we have believed;” we have intelligible and convincing grounds of affiance in God, and in the authenticity of his word; and so, of the doctrines therein delivered to us¹. If the notions

¹ “The veracity of God is as capable of making me know a proposition to be true, as any other way of proof can be: and therefore I do not in such a case *barely believe*, but *know* such a proposition to be true, and attain *certainty*.” Locke, Second reply to the Bishop of Worcester. (vol. III. 281.)

comprised in the word "Trinity" presented no difficulty to the fancy, as to the *manner how*, no one would deny the clear lesson of Scripture to be, that "the Father is God, the Son God, and the Holy Ghost God; and yet that they are not three Gods, but one God." Such, then, is its real purport, which, relying on the divine truth, we reverently receive. We acknowledge on this sure authority, that to be in *personal* properties three, and in *substance* one, though unlike *our* mode of subsistence, or that of any pattern we are conversant with in this material world (and therefore inconceivable to us, whose ideas are bounded by our experience), is yet a real condition of the unparalleled and spiritual essence of the Godhead; which doubtless possesses other distinctions from bodily and finite natures, yet unrevealed. We deem this acquiescence in an admitted communication from our Maker, to be more conformable to *reason*, than to judge and decide, in ignorance, against the instruction of him that "knoweth," and "is true."

1 Cor. ii. 11.
1 John v. 20.

We have already seen, that whatever the difficulty to the imagination, as to the *manner*, the evidence of revelation to the strict, essential Deity of our Lord, is clear, copious, and consistent. This doctrine has been proved not to rest on a few texts, or on one only form of assertion; but to be grounded on a manifold abundance of witness, which, if the language of inspiration be intended by its great Author to instruct men in necessary truth, and to lead them to a right worship, make it impossible for us to err, in acknowledging Jesus Christ to be "both God and Lord."

Ath. Creed.

Ath. Creed. To complete our statement of the Scriptural testimony to the doctrine of the Trinity, it will be my present aim to make appear, by a like reference to the divine word, that “such as the Father is, and such as the Son, *such also is the Holy Ghost* ;” “the Godhead all one, the glory equal, and the majesty co-eternal.”

Gen. i. 2.
Hey, B. iv.
Art. v.
Gill, 52, 165.
Allix.
Pye Smith.

In the Old Testament, wherein, though it was not proposed to give a perfect knowledge touching the nature of the Holy Ghost, yet assuredly nothing was set down without motive and meaning, many things are written, which now give confirmation to doctrines relating to him, subsequently revealed. A third divine Person is there shadowed forth, and represented as taking part in the dealings of God with man. He is called the “Spirit¹ of God,” and is associated in the operations of almighty power, with no hint of inferiority, or dependance of *nature*. We read that when the earth was made, the “Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters”—brooded, as it were, upon the yet moist and unshapen mass, and gave to it form and fertility. To him, therefore, with the Son, whose ample share in the creation of all things has been fully shewn, we must consider the Father as addressing himself, when he would produce his

See Serm. i. p. 26, note.
John iii. 8.
See Hey, B. iv. Art. v.
Gill, ch. ix.
Ridley, Lect. i.
Pye Smith.

¹ When the second person of the Trinity was to be made known, in distinction from the first, seeing all the divine attributes are common to both, a name was given him, which represented what was *peculiar* in his *relation to us*. As the immediate channel of the divine will to man, he was called “*the Word of God*.” So the *third* person is called the *Holy Spirit*, perhaps from his unseen efficacy in imparting holiness and life to the soul of man : as seems intimated in the comparison made by our Lord himself. Or this title may, like that of *Son*, represent the mode of his deriving the divine essence.

last and greatest work; "Let us make man in our image:" as if herein teaching, why he (with the Son) should conspire in the mercy of our redemption. It could not be, that God condescended thus to hold counsel with any *created* nature. Of him he spake, when, angry at the disregard of man to the warning voice of his holy prophets, he pronounced; "My Spirit shall not always strive with man." Afterwards it is said of his chosen people, that "he gave his good Spirit to instruct them." And when they "hardened their neck, and would not hear," that he "testified against them by his Spirit in the prophets," and that "they vexed his Holy Spirit." That by this title it is intended to denote a living Agent, distinct from the Father, is suggested by the forms of speech employed. They who were in old times taught from above, were said to be "filled with the Spirit of God," in a sense in which we, at least, who have the light of the Gospel, can find no difficulty to interpret. And we read alike, that through "the Spirit" by whom Moses wrought his miracles, were the seventy elders empowered to "bear the burden of the people with him." When Isaiah was taught to foretell the coming of "him who should redeem Israel," the Holy Ghost is set forth as being, jointly with the Father, the author of his errand of mercy: "The Lord God and his Spirit hath sent me²;" thus early intimating

Gen. i. 26.
See Bull.
D. F. N.
sect. ii. c.
v. n. 9.
Bingham,
Or. Eccl.
B. XIII.
ch. ii. from
Theophilus.

Gen. vi. 3.

Nehem. ix.
20.

Nehem. ix.
29, 30.

Isai. lxiii.
10;
comp.
Eph. iv. 30.

Exod. xxx.
1, 3.

Numb. xi.
16—38.

Isai. xlviii.
16.

² The ancient Jews understood these words to have reference to the coming of the Messiah. Allix, 326. Origen remarked upon the ambiguity of the expression, and thought it should be rendered; "The Lord God hath sent me and his Spirit;" as proclaiming the mission of both, in the work of man's salvation. Either way, it is an evidence of the separate personality of the Holy Spirit. See Lowth ad loc. Dr Pye Smith, a

the wonder which was cleared up to Joseph, by the assurance touching his betrothed wife; "That which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost." The prophet Joel foretold, that in after times God would "pour out his Spirit upon all flesh"—impart unto them the gifts of this divine ally, who was here called "the Spirit of promise;" whose personal descent, in fulfilment of this word, the apostles did both "see and hear;" and whose presence and grace are still vouchsafed "to us, and to our children." The prophet Haggai, when inspired to encourage those who were commissioned to rebuild the temple, gave them assurance in God's person, "I am with you;" and then adds, almost in the language of the Gospel; "So my Spirit remaineth with you¹:" thus holding up the new sanctuary for "an habitation of God through the Spirit."

These and like notices, scattered through the Old Testament, shewed "the wisdom of God in a mystery;" i. e. wrapped in some obscurity, so as to serve perhaps for conjecture, rather than for knowledge; because it was reserved to the Son himself fully to reveal, as well as freely to "send, unto us the Comforter." The meaning of *prophetical* lessons (it may

learned dissenting writer, though cautious as to the texts which he admits as authority, on this subject, says: "I cannot but think that the unbiassed, grammatical reading of the words in this passage sets before us the Spirit of the Lord, under the notion of a personal subsistence." (Serm. on the Pers. and Div. of the Holy Spirit, p. 21.)

¹ Allix (p. 287) thus renders the Chaldee paraphrase of the passage: "I am with you, saith the Lord of Hosts," with *the Word* which covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt, and my *Spirit* which abideth "in the midst of you;" an ancient and intelligible allusion to the second and third persons of the Trinity.

be allowed to repeat) is always more or less shrouded. It is as a "light that shineth in a dark place, until ^{2 Pet. i. 19.} the day dawn and the day-star arise:" it emits but a *glimmering* of divine truth. Still it is "*light*, ^{2 Pet. i. 21.} whereunto ye do well that ye take heed;" knowing this, that none of this instruction "came by the will ^{2 Pet. i. 22.} of man, but that holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost"—by him of whom it is thus written. By it the Jews^d of old were ^{d See note D.} taught to entertain some notion of the existence of a third person in the one nature of God. However vague and uncertain their speculations, touching the precise manner of his being, and of his relation to the Father; their very surmise of his distinct personal subsistence and of his divine character, grounded on the authorities referred to, and on other texts^e, shews ^{e See note D.} that the language, to their view, contained some intimation of our doctrine; and so is of value to us, as a testimony to its purport; though we have the fuller and clearer light of the Gospel, by which to ascertain its true meaning.

In the New Testament², the passages which teach the divine nature of the Holy Spirit, though many and adequate, are fewer than those which affirm the like majesty of the Son. The first difficulty raised to his disciples by Christ, was in the doctrine of *his own* divinity. As the *first*, perhaps, it was known by him for the *greatest*, and hence the more freely provided for. If he was satisfactorily shewn to be

² See Pearson. (Art. "I believe in the Holy Ghost"). Ridley's first Moyer's Lecture. Wardlaw, Disc. ix. Dr Gill, ch. ix. Dr Pye Smith, Sermon on the Holy Spirit.

perfect God, without impeachment of the divine unity, a less frequent assertion would suffice to establish the equal rank of the Spirit; that he who is spoken of as “the Highest” is spoken of, and none other, can be nothing less than the Highest; that he who proceeded from the Father and the Son, and wrought with them in the salvation of men, dwelling in them, and creating them anew, and by his inhabitation constituting them “temples of the living God,” is himself God. Moreover, there was here no prejudice of the senses to overcome, from his being “found in fashion as a man.” It could not be objected to the claim of the Holy Ghost; “His father and mother we know.” He was in communion with man, only as a Spirit; and “God is a Spirit.” It would therefore be of more easy belief, that he is God. The testimony is commensurate with the need. And it is in the method of God, never, if we may so speak, to put forth superfluous strength. His way of dealing with us is not to o’er-master our faculties, but to call upon us for their diligent use, and instruct us through them; to leave room for the exercise of a reasonable faith and integrity of heart, in interpreting his revelations.

He who is the “true Light,” the “author and finisher of our faith,” gave this notice to his disciples before he “ascended up where he was before;” “I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth.” A third agent in the redemption of man—one other than the Father and the Son—is here held up to our faith and hope. The name by which he is elsewhere

1 Cor. iii. 16.

Phil. ii. 8.

John vi. 42.

John xiv. 24.

John i. 9.

Heb. xii. 2.

John vi. 62.

John xiv. 16,

17.

announced to us by Christ, is, the Holy Ghost, or Spirit; "The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost," John xiv.26. whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things." Before we seek the evidence of his rank, the perverseness of scepticism, rather than any want of distinctness in the language of Scripture, makes it necessary to establish the truth of his *personality*¹; *i.e.* that a real being, not a mere energy, or quality, or operation of the Father or of the Son, is the source of all the blessings we are taught to expect under this sacred name.

The mere forms of speech under which he is frequently mentioned, when fairly weighed, absolutely forbid any other supposition, as is allowed by all sound critics; especially by one^f, whose learning and candour^f See note F. are commended by those who take low views of the divine mysteries. "When he (saith Christ), the Spirit John xvi.13. of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth:" where the word rendered by "*he*," necessarily implies, according to the force of the original language, a real, independent, living agent; as do many other passages of a like grammatical construction. Nor could any different meaning be properly so expressed. And in these words, together with the immediate context, are sundry personal operations assigned to him, such as cannot be construed of any attribute of the Father, as their author; or of the apostles, as those affected by them. "When he, the Spirit of truth, shall come," John xvi.13, 14. he will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that

¹ See Pearson, 364—373; Ridley's first Moyer's Lect.; Dr Gill, ch. ix.

shall he speak ; and he shall shew you things to come. He shall glorify me : for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." There is clearly required, as the instrument of these several effects, one distinct

Pearson, 369,
370.

both from the Father and from the apostles. No mere attribute of the Father, could, in any propriety of language, be said to be *come* from him ; to *hear* and *receive* of *another*, and to *glorify* him from whom he receiveth, by *shewing* it : for the Father heareth and receiveth of none, nor *so* glorifieth any. Neither could any faculty of the apostles, by any figure of speech intended to announce intelligible and useful truth, be held up as *coming anew* from the Father, to *speak* to them, to *guide* them, and to *shew* them the truth. The actions spoken of all necessarily require a mediate agent.

Hey, B. iv.
Art. v. Sect.
13.

John xiv. 26 ;
xvi. 7.

Again : He whom "the Father sends," and whom "Christ sends," must be one having a subsistence and character independent of both : for neither could be said to send some mere operation of the other. He who "maketh intercession for us" with the Father,

Rom. viii. 26.

John xiv. 16.

1 John ii. 1.

mediator. Christ promises "*another* Comforter"—one other than himself, who is elsewhere so called¹ ; a tacit comparison, which necessarily implies one such as himself, a real and living source of consolation, to supply his presence now about to be withdrawn. And he foretold men's rejection of him in terms which lead

John xiv. 17. to the same conclusion ; "Whom the world cannot

¹ In the original language, the word rendered by "Comforter" in one place, and "Advocate" in the other, is the same (παράκλητος).

receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him." To "receive," is to acknowledge as a personal object of faith ; such, therefore, must he be, whom the world *ought to "receive."* And to be disregarded, because of *not being seen*, implies a real being in him, whom it is sinful to slight on this ground ; for there could be no question of seeing a mere attribute. He is introduced in a plain narrative, as directing the apostles, and as in person addressing them ; "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto *I have called them.*" "The Spirit said unto Peter, Behold, three men seek thee ; go with them, for *I have sent them.*" In such instances, the proper force and purport of the personal pronoun cannot be mistaken. It could not be thus employed, save of a living being. He is moreover expressly distinguished from the graces which are ascribed to him, by being represented, in one and the same sentence, as the source of all ; "There are diversities of gifts, but the *same Spirit.*" The Spirit cannot, then, be a gift, but one from whom gifts proceed. In dispensing to the preachers of Gospel truth the qualifications required for the several offices of their ministry, he is described as exercising the personal attributes of discrimination, and purpose, and action grounded upon them ; "All these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as *he will.*" He is frequently named absolutely as *the Spirit*—a form of speech applicable only to an independent subsistence ; "They assayed to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit suffered them not." By this title he is said to "search the deep things of God"—his hidden counsels ; a trifling and strange

See John i. 11, 12.

Acts xiii. 2.

Acts x. 19, 20.

1 Cor. xii. 4 ; comp. xii. 8.

1 Cor. xii. 11.

Acts xvi. 7.
See John i. 32.
2 Cor. v. 5.

1 Cor. ii. 10.

assertion, if the Spirit could be regarded merely as a *faculty of the Father*; informing us only, that the divine mind is conscious of its own thoughts. The general tenour of the language of Scripture, touching the Spirit, is in perfect accordance with these views.

He is continually said either to "hear," to "teach," to "speak," to "love," to "dwell with us, and in us;" to "shed abroad in our hearts the love of God," to "sanctify," to "bear witness," to "help," to "reprove," to "seal unto the day of redemption," to be "grieved" at our perverseness in refusing his succour, and resisting his suggestions; operations and affections properly requiring a personal subject; and in most of which the substitution of an impersonal attribute would render the meaning perplexed and irrational, and give to Scripture the character of a fanciful allegory, rather than of the sobriety of divine instruction in needful truth. Actions and sentiments belonging to a *person*, when ascribed in language not otherwise stamped as figurative, must be intended to refer to a person. And it is no objection to this conclusion, to point out occasional texts where "the Spirit" is, after an ordinary figure, put for his own gifts; as where it is written, "the Holy Ghost was poured out," or "was not yet." Such passages bear their own interpretation with them. And the explanation which gives them a rational meaning, takes nothing from the proper force and testimony of those others, to which it is totally inapplicable. It is enough that he is the subject of many and clear assertions, which can only be understood of a real, living, intelligent agent.

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God,"

John xvi. 12,
17; xiv. 23;
xv. 30.
Rom. viii. 9;
v. 5; xv. 16;
viii. 16.
1 John v. 6.
Heb. x. 15.
Rom. viii. 26.
John xvi. 8.
Eph. iv. 30.

Acts x. 45;
John vii. 39;
comp. Acts
xix. 2.

Hey, B. iv.
Art. v. Sect.
13.

2 Tim. iii. 16.

for our learning: and his wisdom would not permit therein the combination of plain and figurative titles, so as necessarily to perplex, or mislead. All the instances, therefore, in which the Holy Spirit is coupled with Christ, or with him and the Father, are certain intimations of his independent existence. When it is said, that “through *Christ*, we both (Jews and Gentiles) have access, by one *Spirit*, unto the Father;” this ascription of a joint mediation to the Son and Spirit, makes both to be agents, with a like reality. So the distinction drawn between sin against the Father and Son, and sin against the Holy Ghost, shews the latter to possess some *peculiar* title to our reverence—some relation to us affording a separate ground of offence, and hence a real being. Many¹ other examples of such united mention might be adduced. But it is sufficient to have thus directed attention to them. As if to leave those without excuse, who, in fulfilment of Christ’s anticipating reproach, will not “receive him because they *see* him not,” a sensible token was on one occasion afforded of his presence, simultaneously with the other persons of the blessed Trinity. We read that at the baptism of Christ, “the Holy Ghost descended upon him in a bodily shape,” while a voice came from heaven, which said, “Thou art my beloved Son.”² Though

Eph. ii. 18.

Matth. xii.
31, 32.

See Rom. xv.
30.
1 Cor. vi. 11.
Gal. iv. 4—6.

Luke iii. 22.

¹ The Holy Ghost is introduced forty-eight times with the Father and the Son together, besides the passages in which he is named with Christ alone. See Dr S. Clarke, Script. Doctr. Pt. ii. sect. 55.

² Allix tells us (p. 238): “The three persons of the Trinity did then so visibly manifest themselves, that the ancients took from thence occasion to bid the Arians, “go to the river Jordan, and you shall see the Trinity.”

See

the evidence of this apparition was vouchsafed in condescension¹ to man, who is incapable, in his present state, of discerning a purely spiritual nature; and the outward symbol bore no resemblance to the real substance of the Holy Ghost, any more than the voice corresponded to any material organs in the Father; yet it is enough to signify to us, that he who was clothed with a visible form, was a living being, and not a mere attribute or energy. It is ever the aim of God to instruct us in the truth. And he would not exhibit a token, which, after man's experience and natural apprehension, would suggest the belief of a real subsistence², unless such were the property of the Spirit, whom the symbol was made known to represent. 'The form of baptism prescribed by our Lord will be more fully referred to, as an evidence of the *divinity* of the Holy Spirit, with other passages bearing this double testimony. It suffices, therefore, to observe here, that its witness to his distinct *personality*^g is conclusive. Belief commanded "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," holds up all in the same light; teaches them to be real, independent, and equal, by requiring for each of them a like acknowledgment and reverence. And the same une-

^g See note F.

See also Bull, D. F. N. sect. ii. c. v. n. 9, who shews Irenæus to have considered this as a witness, to the senses, of a Trinity of persons in the Godhead.

¹ A *spirit* can only be made evident to man, by means of some effect upon his senses. All the notices of the divine presence have been made either by unusual appearances, or by some extraordinary sound. See again Acts ii. 3. of the Holy Spirit.

² "The scripture doth not liken substances to things that be no substances." Hutchinson, "Image of God," p. 136.

quivocal inference is to be drawn from the apostolic blessing. If “the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ” proceed from a person, and the “love of God” from a person; then “the communion of the Holy Ghost” must needs be a gift imparted by a person also. These words are, in fact, a *prayer*. And “no man prayeth unto an inspiration: no man crieth to an affection.” Hutchinson, “Image of God,” p. 136.

Having thus shewn that the Holy Spirit is a living agent, we are next to seek his rank in the scale of being. It may at once be asserted, that none can be assigned to him, consistently with Scripture, save that of God³. There is no expression which tends to class him with the host of heaven: and no nature is intimated to us, between the angelic, and the divine. His very title, “*Spirit of God*,” implies a community in the Godhead. And whatever is recorded as his work, is represented as of God. When the Son of God was about “to be made flesh,” a “body was prepared him,” not after the ordinary birth of men, but in fulfilment of the prediction; “A virgin⁴ shall conceive.” This modifi- Heb. x. 5. Is. vii. 14. Luke i. 27. Matth. i. 18, 23.

³ The first heresy, touching the Holy Spirit, disputed his personality, and admitted his divinity. The Sabellians^a saw the language of Scripture to be so high, both as to the Son and the Holy Ghost, that, unable to deny either of them to be God, they, in order to preserve the doctrine of the divine *unity*, supposed the *one person of the Father* to be intended under each of these titles. They stated their difference with the Church at large in this question; *εἷνα θεὸν ἔχομεν ἢ τρεῖς θεοὺς*; “Are we to have one God, or three Gods?” a clear proof, that they knew the doctrine of the Church to be, that the Holy Ghost is God. See Berriman, p. 125.

^a See note O. Sermon. I.

⁴ Bishop Pearson (p. 211 and note 1.) understands the miraculous conception to have been intimated in the original promise of a Saviour, as the “seed of the woman” alone. He interprets, after a like sense, Jer. Gen. iii. 15. xxxi. 22; “A woman shall compass a man;” *i. e.* a woman alone.

cation of a law of nature, could only proceed from that authority which appointed the law; and it was the work of the Holy Ghost. Accordingly, when the angel explained to the perplexed and incredulous Mary, the preternatural event which he had announced to her, proclaiming its author; "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee;" he made known also the exalted condition of him who had not yet been *familiarly* revealed, by adding; "The power of *the Highest* shall overshadow thee." And he proceeded; "Therefore also (as *his* work) that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of *God*," even as to that human nature which he receiveth of thee, through this divine instrument. Miracles, which, it is truly said, "no man can do except God be with him," are called "his gifts;" and the "demonstration of the Spirit" is said to be the "power of God." All those energies in men of which he has ever been the merciful source, whether *ordinary* graces, by which we are "sanctified," and "sealed unto the day of redemption;" or those *marvellous* powers, needed only for the setting up of the religion of the Gospel, and therefore since withheld; are declared, as being of him, to be of God: "There are diversities of gifts, but the same *Spirit*; diversities of operations, but it is the same *God*, which worketh all, in all."

Again: Prayer was commanded to the "Lord of the harvest," that "he would send forth labourers into his harvest;" and the "Lord," who answered this prayer, was, according to the distribution of offices in the Gospel economy, the Holy Ghost, who did set the

Luke i. 35.

Pearson,
373.

John iii. 2.

1 Cor. xii.
10, 11.
Heb. ii. 4.
1 Cor. ii. 4, 5.

Eph. iv. 30.

1 Cor. xii.
4, 6.

Matt. ix. 38.

apostles over the Church, and who abode perpetually with them, guiding them in their selection and consecration of others to the work; “separating” each unto his appointed labour, and “giving him utterance for it.” They who, after the promise of the prophet, were to be “taught of *God*,” received the promise in the teaching of the *Holy Ghost*. Accordingly it is written of their doctrine suggested by him; “He that despiseth, despiseth not man, but *God*.” A temple is, in the language of Scripture, the “habitation” of the Deity—the “place where his honour dwelleth.” Hence it is written; “Ye are the temple of the living God: as God hath said, I will dwell in them.” Yet the same apostle thus remonstrates: “Know ye not that your body is the temple of the *Holy Ghost* which is in you?” And again: “Know ye not that ye are the temple of *God*, and that the *Spirit of God* dwelleth in you?” It had been a prophetic promise, that when Christ should have “ascended up on high, he should receive gifts for men, that the Lord God might dwell among them.” In reference to this prediction, while as yet unfulfilled, it was remarked by John, in explanation of words just uttered by our Lord, that the “Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified;” and afterwards by St Luke, that “being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the *Holy Ghost*, he had shed it forth.” Thus, then, is it, that the “*Lord God* doth dwell among us:” we are “an habitation of *God* through the *Spirit*.” In exact agreement with this doctrine and language of the prophets and apostles, Christ, after that he had an-

Acts xx. 28.

Acts xiii. 2.

Acts ii. 4.
Luke xii. 12.

Isai. liv. 13.
John vi. 45.
1 Cor. ii. 13.

1 Thess. iv. 8.

Ps. xxvi. 6.

2 Cor. vi. 17.

1 Cor. vi. 16.

1 Cor. iii. 19;
comp.
Eph. ii. 22.

Ps. lxxviii. 18.

John vii. 39.

Acts ii. 33.

Eph. ii. 22

John xiv. 15, 17. nounced "another Comforter," who should "dwell in

those who love him," straightway, in repetition of the promise, bids them look for the inhabitation of the Father and of himself, saying; "*We* will come unto him, and make our abode with him;" thus intimating the inseparable union of three persons in one Godhead—a sacred Trinity inhabiting in every pure heart.

Again: It has been already observed, that we learn to know God by the attributes, the operations, and the honour ascribed to him in his Word. And hence we safely conclude, that he, to whom the like are assigned on the same authority, must partake in the divine nature. To this conclusion it must be the aim of the author of revelation to lead us; for it is the just and obvious conclusion of reason, from such premises. And by all these tokens we are called upon to acknowledge the Holy Ghost as God. He who took part (as we have seen) in the counsel and work of creation, and has at all times been the inspirer of holy men commissioned to speak in the divine name, must have been "before all things;" nor hath he any beginning¹ or origin anywhere attributed to him. Agreeably to this view, he is called the "*eternal*"² Spirit." His power was shewn to be *almighty*,

Gen. i. 2;
comp.
Heb. viii. 5,
with Heb.
ix. 8; also
Mark xii. 36;
Acts xxviii.
25; 1 Pet. i.
11; 2 Pet. i.
21.

Heb. ix. 14.

¹ Dr S. Clarke states, that "The Scripture, speaking of the Spirit of God, never mentions any limitation of time, when he derived his being or essence from the Father; but supposes him to have existed with the Father from the beginning." Script. Doctr. Pt. II. § 20.

² There is some difference of opinion, whether these words apply to the Holy Ghost, or to the divine nature in Christ. See Ridley's Moyer's Lect. p. 12; Dodd's Bible, and Macknight, ad. loc.

Dr S. Clarke refers the words to the Holy Ghost. Script. Doctr. No. 1132.* So Hey, B. iv. Art. v. Sect. 11. Bull rather inclines the other way. D. F. N. Sect. i. c. ii. n. 5.

by his share in the creation; and, in these latter times, by all the “miracles and gifts” by which the apostles Heb. ii. 4. were enabled to allege “the witness of God.” His *omniscience* is set forth by the promise of the Saviour, that he should “guide us into all truth,” John xvi. 13. and by the declaration of the apostle, that “he searcheth all things, yea, even the deep things of God.” 1 Cor. ii. 10. Hence, as it had been foretold of him, he did “shew John xvi. 13. things to come; looked forward into the abyss of time, and did both literally and figuratively see which seed Acts xi. 28; xx. 23. should prosper, and which come to nought; a foresight which God claimeth to belong exclusively to the divine nature, saying; “Shew the things that are to come Isai. xli. 23. hereafter, that *we* may know that ye are gods.” Nor can he be less than *omnipresent*, who heareth and ministereth to every spiritual need of “every one that asketh,” and giveth power to be “a witness unto Acts i. 8. Christ, unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

Such are the properties and operations which, we are incidentally taught, belong to the Holy Spirit. And we discover in the same Word consistent tokens of a reverence suited to a divine being, and unsuitable to any *created* nature. To “lie to the Holy Acts v. 3. Pearson, 375. Hey, B. iv. Art. v. Dr. J. Knight, No. 66. Ghost” is, in the case of Ananias, pronounced to be to “lie unto God.” To him, together with Christ, the Apostle appealeth, as unto God, when he would give to his assertion the solemnity of an oath: “I Rom. ix. 1; comp. i. 9; Deut. vi. 13. say the truth in Christ, I lie not; my conscience also bearing me witness in the *Holy³ Ghost*.” All sin is

³ See in Berriman, p. 42, an oath preserved by St Basil from the writings of St Clement, after the Jewish form, “The Lord liveth.” That
of

1 John iii. 4. against divine authority, whence cometh "the law," of which "sin is the transgression." Yet sin is spoken of as against the *Holy Ghost*, and is held up as in-expiable; "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men: and whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come." It is impossible that such language, employed under the sanction of divine authority to instruct us in the truth, could be expected to convey to our minds any lower estimate of his nature whom it regards, than that it is level with that of the Highest. And what of *peculiar* import and sanctity seems attached to his name, has regard, perhaps, to the part which he bears in the Gospel economy. His is the *latest* work in our redemption. He "abideth for ever with us," to

John xvi. 8. "convince of sin," to turn us from our evil way, to "sanctify." By *his* aid, humbly sought in the prayer of faith, other guilt may be washed away, through the

2 Cor. vii. 10. blood of the Lamb, and "repentance come, to salvation." But while *he* is "grieved," the very author

Eph. iv. 23; Tit. iii. 5. of "godly sorrow," and of "renewal in the spirit of our mind," is rejected; and we must needs remain

Tit. i. 16. Eph. ii. 12. "unto every good work reprobate," "having no hope." It is perhaps *thus* that sin against the Holy Ghost is the most deadly. He is held up to our faith and rever-

of Clement is; "God liveth, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit;" shewing them to be all alike adjoined, as the principle of life.

ence by another token, of no less significance; the same harbinger being selected of his approach, as had before announced the divine presence. He who is emphatically said to “walk upon the wings of the wind,” by “a great and strong wind,” made known to Elijah that he did “pass by.” And when the Holy Ghost would give sensible witness to the apostles of his descent, he controuled this same element to give the warning; “A sound came from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind.” Such a co-incidence did not happen by chance, nor is recorded without motive. And what lesson can it have been intended to convey, but of an equal majesty in those, whom the powers of nature are thus made to herald alike?

Ps. civ. 3.

1 Kings xix. 11.

Acts ii. 2.

But the most unequivocal marks of divine honour required or paid to the Holy Ghost, are, the appointment by our Lord of baptism in his name, equally with that of the Father and himself; and the apostolic invocation from him, jointly with the Father and the Son, of those blessings which Scripture teaches us to seek from God only, and which none but he who is God can bestow.

It has been stated in a former^h discourse, that baptism being in familiar use among the Jews as a preliminary rite for the reception of a proselyte to their religion, previously to which a renunciation of his idolatry and a profession of his new faith in the “Lord God of Israel” were required; it could be no matter of surprise to them, that Christ should select it as a mode of introduction to his Church; or that he should appoint, as an essential prelude, a confession of God, as he had finally and more fully revealed him.

^h p. 62, and references.

In this light, of an indispensable creed, would they readily regard the formulary which he now ordained; and in this light must *we* regard it. It was the aim of this, his latest commission to his apostles, to hold up the truth to Jews and Gentiles; to bring all into “one fold under one shepherd;” to the acknowledgment of “one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God.” And the one God, in whose name all men, then and in all after ages, were to be baptized, in token of their faith, and as a pledge and channel of the blessings to follow to them; “The living and true God,” to whom the Gentiles were to turn from “dumb idols;” “The Creator whom they were to serve,” with no mixture of any “*creature*”—was “the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost¹,” with one equal, and indiscriminate honour. Had there been no other testimony to the divine nature of the Spirit, this had sufficed. For we cannot believe that in a formulary clearly prescribed with a view to set forth the true object of religious faith and worship, the supreme Lord of all power and wisdom would permit the association with himself of any created being, or of any mere quality

John x. 16.

Eph. iv. 5,
6.

1 Thess. i. 9.

1 Cor. xii. 2.
Rom. i. 25.
Acts xiv. 15.

¹ See Waterland, Vol. II. Sermon VIII. (on our text); Stillingfleet, Disc. on the Trin. ch. ix.; Pearson, pp. 43, 390; Mr Wm. Hey's Tract, pp. 57—59.

The Socinians, sensible of the witness which these words *seem*, at least, to bear to the doctrine of the Trinity, would exclude them from the text of Scripture, or even abolish baptism. See Wall, Inf. Bapt. Vol. II. 257.

Lightfoot, in a Sermon on Matt. xxviii. 19, says: “Lay Rom. i. 25. to this text; *Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator.* The casting off the Gentiles was, because they worshipped the creature. What was their recovery in the text? Was it to bring the worship of the creature among them again, as the Arian and Socinian gloss? No; but to bring the knowledge and worship of the Creator among them, of the true God: and that was Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.” Works, Vol. VI. 410.

or attribute. There is no distinction of homage herein required to the objects of faith; there can, then, be in them no dissimilitude, or disparity of nature.

That such was the view of the apostles, is ascertained not only from the course of instruction given by them to the disciples previously to baptism (which as it rests less on Scripture history than on subsequent testimony, I shall not yet insist upon), but by the habitual combination of these names in forms and on occasions implying divine honour, after this commandment of their master, confirmed to them by the subsequent illumination and guidance of the Holy Spirit himself. They are found thus associated forty-eight times in the New Testament, after the enumeration of a learned writer² already referred to. This can be no casualty, but the result of a settled conviction in the minds of the authorized preachers of the truth, that these divine persons are of one and the same nature, and in equal relation to man. And a further evidence of this their persuasion, is afforded in the fact, that on some of these occasions *prayer* is made to each of them, for the particular³ efficacy which he contributes in the work of man's salvation. Of such a nature is the supplication for "grace, and love, and communion, from the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost," of the Apostle Paul, commissioned to bless effectually in the divine name. Similar also

See, however, Acts xix. 1-5.

² Cor. xiii. 14.

John xx. 22, 23.
See p. 11, and Numb. vi. 22-27.

² Dr S. Clarke, Script. Doctr. Pt. II. § 55.

³ This variety of office in the Gospel economy, in the three persons of the blessed Trinity, is thought to be intimated in another passage; "There are diversities of *gifts*, but the same *Spirit*; differences of *administrations*, but the same *Lord*; diversities of *operations*, but the same *God*." See Dr S. Clarke's Sermon on this text, Vol. vi.

⁶ 2 Cor. xii. 5.

Rev. i. 4, 5. is the blessing of the “beloved disciple;” “Grace be unto you, and peace from him which is, and which was, and which is to come, and from the *seven Spirits who are before his throne*, and from Jesus Christ, which is the faithful witness.” It is evidently a merely *formal* variation of the preceding prayers, in language adapted to the immediate style of the writer. The place assigned, between the Father and the Son, shews who¹ alone can be intended by the “seven Spirits;” and the number denotes his manifold gifts, after the figurative manner of this prophetic book, and in special allusion to the enumeration of the prophet Isaiah. If this frequent and solemn introduction of these sacred persons together, with no mark of inequality or distinction, with like reverence and in allusion to like exalted ends, be intended to impress upon us their communion in the Godhead, it is apt and accountable. On any other supposition, it conveys no clear instruction; every other explanation is forced—the device of man, not the lesson of revelation.

Is. xi. 2;
comp. 1 Cor.
xii. 8.
Rev. v. 6.

When much language and many signs and tokens are presented to us, in the inspired record from which we are to seek the truth which “makes wise unto salvation,” all tending to invest the Holy Ghost with the fulness of the divine majesty and nature; what must be the aim of its merciful author? He who forbids worship save to God, would he thus hold up one as clothed in the attributes of God, if he would not teach us to regard him as God? What motive, other than this, can we suppose, for approximating to such a description, on a point where error is so hateful to *him*—so ruinous to *us*? It should not be omitted to

notice, that while we have such various evidence in assertion of the deity of the Holy Ghost, there is not a word which can be properly construed to assign to him any other rank—to lower him to the condition of a *creature*. And between God and creature there can be no middle¹ nature. Whatever being is not created, is uncreated: whatever is uncreated, is God. Seeing it must have been the aim of divine wisdom, in revealing to our knowledge the existence of the Holy Spirit and his concurrence in the great scheme of our salvation, to invite from us suitable reverence and affections, which must necessarily be commensurate with our apprehension of his dignity; we cannot but conclude it to have been the purpose of all this language, to lead us to form *some* judgment as to his true nature: nor can we doubt what that judgment was intended to be, no nature but one being hinted at. We can have no fear to err from the divine scope, or to transgress the divine will, in *regarding and worshipping the Holy Ghost, as God*.

I must here briefly allude to the argument derived from the ancient belief of the Church, already adduced in confirmation of the divine nature of the Son of God.

Faith is assent to the testimony of God, and is therefore to be grounded on his revelation only. But that alone is his revelation, which is received after the meaning intended by him. And it must justly confirm our confidence in the accuracy of our interpretation, if we can allege in its support

¹ Bull, D. F. N. Sect. iv. c. iv. n. 8; Waterland's Def. of Qu. XIII.

Rom. vi. 17.
 Luke i. 2, 4.
 2 Tim. i. 13.

the agreeing construction of the primitive Church; in which the authorised preachers, having received together with their commission “the form of doctrine” which they were to teach, either from the apostles themselves or from teachers instructed by them, could not mistake the truth, in any point of material import. Now that the first Christians entertained the views which we have presented, is witnessed in many ways¹. There is the indirect testimony of hostile sneers or reproaches; and other, and direct evidence of various Christian writers, whose works, or fragments of them, have been preserved. Original creeds, ancient hymns and forms of doxology and early liturgies, the scoffs of unbelievers, the vindications of apologists, the ever prompt and authoritative censures against heretical dissenters from this catholic faith—all shew that the Church acknowledged the deity of the *Spirit of God*, as well as of the *Son of God*. The charge of polytheism objected to it, is an indication of its belief; though misunderstood, or misrepresented by the authors of the reproach. And it was repelled, not by denying the equal worship of the three divine persons, but by asserting their union in one divine nature and essence, so as to be but one God. Surely “that may justly be looked on as the sense of the Church, which is owned both by the friends and the enemies of it.” In every quarter of the world, to which the Gospel rapidly penetrated, and in every tongue, one common faith was founded upon this language of

Stillingf. iii.
 660.

¹ For the creed of the early Church, and the assertions here, generally, see the authorities referred to, Sermon. iii. pp. 112—114.

Scripture, and such as we profess. No cause can be assigned for this wide and general agreement, but the derivation of the universal doctrine from one common source of apostolical authority.

And that which was the original, has been also the permanent creed of the Church. The faith of the great body of Christians, on this point, has been ever the same. In spite of all the sophistries by which its enemies have, from time to time, sought to invalidate it, God has permitted to this construction of his Word a constant and universal reception. He whose object it was, in the ministry of his Son, to enlighten mankind with the knowledge of the truth, and who had ever the understandings both of teachers and disciples under his control, has kept both stedfast in this doctrine. No account can be given for the immediate and uninterrupted prevalence of this creed, but that it represents the true purport of the divine instruction, and has been preserved under the divine providence. In a matter, the chief aim of his revelation, God would not, from its first publication, allow those who have “desired the sincere milk of the Word”—have coveted earnestly the pure nourishment of its heavenly wisdom—wholly to err; and “send them (as unto those who have no “love of the truth”) strong delusion, that they should believe a lie.” In the interpretation of his Word, the perpetual sense of his Church is the voice of God. Nor with a concurrence of such testimonies in support of this doctrine, can any thing short of a *further revelation*, justify a deviation from it. For there is no opening, in any existing means, for fresh light, to

1 Pet. ii. 2.

2 Thess. ii. 10, 11.

give a new sense to Scripture; no room for a countervailing *prescription*.

Moreover, the heresy of the Sabellians bears a clear and persuasive witness, as to the original faith of the Church. They acknowledged, in common with those from whom they separated, the unanswerable evidence of Scripture to the perfect divinity of the Holy Ghost; insomuch that, not understanding how to reconcile this doctrine with the unity of God, they supposed the one God, the Father, to be intended by this language, as well as by that applied to the *Son*. They made these three characters to centre in one and the same divine agent. And they reproached the church with *Tritheism*¹—with setting up *three* Gods—on account of the worship they paid to the Son and the Holy Ghost, as personally distinct from the Father. Hence while, by their creed, they affirm the divinity of the Holy Ghost; by the article of their dissent and the tenour of their reproach, they shew the catholic faith to have recognised, together with this doctrine, his separate and independent character.

Thus it is, I trust, made appear, by manifold proof, to be the doctrine of the Word of God, that the Holy Spirit is not a mere impersonal attribute of the Father, or of the Son, but that he has a real subsistence, and is a true person², as they are;

¹ See Bingham's Orig. Eccles. B. XIII. ch. ii., who gives Tertullian's explanation of the Church doctrine, in refutation of the charge.

² "If the holy Scripture teacheth us plainly, and frequently doth inculcate upon us (that which the uniform course of nature and the peaceable government of the world doth also speak), that there is but one true God; if it as manifestly doth ascribe to the three persons of the blessed Trinity, the same august names, the same peculiar characters,

that neither is he a *creature*, inferior and subordinate See note L. in his nature to them; but, together with them, Creator; partaking fully and equally in whatever belongs to the Godhead—its substance, attributes and honour; “that as the Father is God, and the Son Ath. Creed. is God, so also the Holy Ghost is God.”

If, then, we combine with this conclusion that to which we had previously arrived respecting the nature of the *Son of God*, we find the whole instruction of revelation respecting the Deity to be, first, that there is one only God; and secondly, that there are three, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, to whom the same divine character is fully ascribed. That both these doctrines are taught in Scripture, is as clear and certain as any other truth therein. Hence we may be satisfied, that though they may set bounds to each other, they cannot be in real contradiction. There must be some manner after which they can consist together, though our understanding may not be able to discern it, with any clearness or satisfaction. Our proper duty is, to receive both doctrines, because both are found in the Word of God. *Faith in the God of revelation is faith in a Trinity.*

When the Lord speaketh, it becometh “all flesh Zech. ii. 13. to be silent before him;” to hold their vain reasonings, and submit. “Let God be true, *though* every man Rom. iii. 4. Macknight.

the same divine attributes (essential to the Deity), the same superlatively admirable operations of creation and providence; if it also doth prescribe to them the same supreme honours, services, praises, and acknowledgements to be paid unto them all; this may be abundantly enough to satisfy our minds, to stop our mouths, to smother all doubt and dispute about this high and holy mystery.” Barrow, Sermon. “A Def. of the Bl. Tr.”

be a liar:" let his Word be received, though it falsify all the conclusions of human wit. He reveals many things *partially*—affords only faint outlines of heavenly mysteries; but sufficient for our need, to which alone, in his present dealings with us, he has regard. He discloses enough to enlarge our thoughts of him, and exalt our feelings; but not wherewith to satisfy curiosity, or, by a full display, to dispense with the exercise of our faith. It is clearly consistent with the wisdom of the Supreme Being, to hold up lofty truths to his reasonable creatures, in a temporary condition of trial; though he withhold the manner or the motives of them, until a more suitable season. It may, obviously, further the ends proposed here for man, that God should teach the divinity of an atoning Saviour, and the operation of a like sacred Sanctifier; though he keep back the knowledge of the mode of their subsistence in his own unity, and the considerations which recommended to him the interposition of such exalted instruments in the concerns of so humble a race. We can understand how such a revelation may be suited to our capacities and present wants. And if God exhibits to us many things, in our present brief and preparatory existence, thus under a veil; we may rest assured, that so far as they are shewn, they are shewn *accurately*; that what he makes known, certainly is, just as it is made known; must be true, in the way, and to the extent, that he imparts. He may, for wise ends, hold up a *dim*, but never a *false* light. He never speaks, but to instruct us in the truth. He knows the force and effect of human language, the vehicle

of his communications; and will not lead those who trust in his Word into error. Our wisdom, therefore, as well as our proper obligation, is, to receive, in simplicity of faith, whatever it has pleased him to lay before our minds; however it may vary from our experience, or surpass our fancy, which are conversant only with objects so dissimilar, in their whole nature, to those about which our difficulty arises. That the divine nature and essence belong equally to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and yet that they are together but one God, however difficult to our imaginations to conceive, will be believed by all who consult the Word of God, in undoubting reliance on the veracity of its author.

I have said that there must be some manner after which these truths are reconciled: the unity and plurality cannot really be in opposition to each other. Hence they must relate to different elements of the divine nature. The only method which the human mind has been able to suggest, by which these doctrines may be preserved entire, is, by regarding the *unity* as appertaining to the *substance* of the Godhead; the *plurality*, to the *mode of subsistence*^k in it—to what constitutes *person*; that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are *three*, so far as to be separate in their relations, their consciousness, will, and agency; but *one*, inasmuch as they exist in the community of the same undivided substance, of which all the properties belong to each of them; “are three Persons, of one substance, power, and eternity¹.”

^k See Serm. I. note B, and references.

First Article.
¹ See note H.

It is true, that man's understanding, while able to apprehend the *matter* thus expressed, is wholly

unable to conceive the *manner of it*: the mode in which three distinct persons participate in one substance. But then we are wholly ignorant in the matter of substance: we cannot conceive our own; still less, that of the infinite and transcendent Deity. So complete is our incapacity to attain to any idea of *spiritual* substance, that our Lord himself attempted not to convey to us a notion of what it *is*, but only of what it *is not*: "A spirit hath not flesh and bones." Doubtless the substance of God differs from all others, spiritual as well as material; and, consequently, may admit of many modes and relations, of which none that we are acquainted with is susceptible. Dissimilarity of subsistence, in substances wholly unlike, cannot be a just ground of doubt, or even of surprise.

Luke xxiv.
39.

Accordingly this has been the mode of reconciling these doctrines, as far as they can be reconciled by our narrow faculties, ever¹ since the expounders of christian faith began, in treating of this mysterious theme, to venture beyond the terms of Scripture; although it was not till disputes compelled more of method and exactness, that the explanation was developed with dialectic precision, or was introduced into the creeds of the Church.

This has been the method, by which it has been sought to combine and explain more fully the Scriptural truths, that there is but one living and true God; and that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are that one God. And if the ancient for-

¹ See Berriman; Bull; Potter, pp. 107—110. See also Augustine's Confession, in Stillingfleet, Vol. III. 450—451.

formularies in which this explanation is embodied, are drawn up with a minuteness and subtlety of definition unknown to Scripture; this departure from simplicity has been called for by the perverseness and temerity of heresy. Men would speculate and dogmatize against the true tenour of Holy Writ. Hence it became necessary, in order to preserve the truth, to follow them, and expose their errors by extending^m the canon of orthodoxy. What is thus taught, if obscure to our conception, is intelligible in its aim; and if not directly expressed in Scripture, is a just inference from it. While the difficulty of our description of the divine Trinity, as contained in the Nicene and Athanasian creeds, is not denied; it may yet be truly asserted, that he who should reject these formularies, and *take up with any other*, seemingly more level to his understanding, would soon find himself at variance with some clear doctrine of the divine Word: and the farther he should wander from these ancient and well-considered expositions of “the truth as it is in Jesus,” in reliance on other guides, the wider would be his disagreement with the inspired, and only safe authority, of his Gospel.

It may by some be thought needless to insist on this difficult doctrine, of the Trinity. But it cannot be so. As we receive or reject it, we have different objects of faith and worship, and so a different religion. It cannot be unimportant whether or no we adore the Son of God, and the Spirit of God, if they be truly God, and are so revealed to us. “Whom we know for God, we are bound to glorify as God,” lest “professing ourselves to be wise we become foolish.” The

^m See notes
I and K.

Rom. i. 21,
22.

great author of revelation would not speak to us from heaven what it is useless for us to hear, especially in what regards his own nature, and his relations towards us. By imparting the knowledge of these divine persons, he has sufficiently declared the obligation of believing in them, and reverencing them, as such. Moreover, by limiting the baptismal creed to the acknowledgment of their equal majesty with himself, he proclaimed this to be the foundation of Gospel faith; and by requiring this profession of it in baptism, he has made the denial of the Trinity to be the renunciation of the christian character. But the necessity of embracing this creed, in order to our effectual admission to the privileges of his covenant, is not left to mere inference. Christ added to the commission which he gave to the apostles to proselytize to the faith and hopes of the Gospel, this express declaration; “He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be damnedⁿ.”

Mark xvi.
16.

ⁿ See note
K.

This is no vague or trifling announcement. It conveys a distinct and solemn restriction of Gospel mercy to such as shall truly adopt in baptism the God of the Gospel; that God whom he, to this end, now held up as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. And it is only by enlarging this creed by a fuller expression, in order to preserve its true meaning¹ and put down errors as they sprung up, and not by

¹ The necessity of a right faith is frequently inculcated in Scripture. The denunciations in the first and second Epistles of St John, are not against *unbelievers*—those who reject the Gospel of Jesus—but against those who hold perverse opinions touching *his nature*, contrary to what is taught therein. (See note P. Sermon. 1.) See also Gal. i. 8; 2 Tim. i. 13.

adding to it *new* articles, or increased severity of menace against unbelievers, that the Catholic Church exceeds his divine warning, when, in one of its ancient expositions of his doctrine, it announces; "He that will be saved, must thus think of the Trinity²." Ath. Creed.
 From the very time of the apostles, and of those who followed them, none were admitted to baptism, or, consequently, to the profession of Christianity, who had not been thus instructed, and thus made confession of their faith.

It is no new thing with the Almighty, in his dispensations with men, to impart "things hard to 2 Pet. iii. 16. be understood;" as an exercise of that just confidence which becometh creatures towards him who made them, and would eternally bless them; and which we learn from him everywhere in his Word, is pleasing in his sight, and also the only fruitful source John xv. 4. of moral obedience. This method of dealing with us is instanced in his prophetic communications, whether such as regarded individuals, or such as affected his whole people. In the promise to Abraham, his trust in God was both proved and strengthened, when, in his old age and that of his wife, it was predicted that he should "become a great and mighty Gen. xviii. 18. nation;" contrary to all credibility, grounded on natural energies and human experience, so that "Sarah Gen. xviii. 11, 12. laughed at the prediction." So the manner of the future Saviour's birth, "A *virgin* shall conceive and Isai. vii. 14. bear a son," was a stumbling block, and an inexpli-

² See Bp. Cleaver's Sermon on "the Origin and utility of Creeds," and Waterland on the "Importance of the Doctrine of the Trinity." (Works, vol. v.)

Luke i. 34. cable *contradiction*, to the view of mere reason ; until
 its literal completion, by the agency of the Holy Ghost,
 Luke xviii. 27. made known that “what is impossible with men,
 is possible with God.” In these, and like revelations,
 surpassing man’s apprehension as to the *manner*,
 though intelligible as to the *matter*, faith was tried.
 And so the Lord *now* tries the faith of his people, by
 their mode of treating difficulties propounded on his
 2 Tim. ii. 19. authority ; thus “knoweth them that are his.” He
 has seen good to lift in part the veil of the flesh,
 and to exhibit to our spiritual discernment some
 glimpses of his nature. And what he has seen it
 fitting for him, and useful for us, to display, it can-
 not become us to turn away from, or lightly regard.
 To remain ignorant where we have means of know-
 ledge, bespeaks indifference or infidelity. The con-
 viction and feeling of the pious and rational christian
 will be ; “I am persuaded that God is *true*, and that
 what he says, is ; I am persuaded that God is *wise*
 and *good*, and that what he deigns to teach, it must be
 profitable for me to know, and prudent to lay to heart.”

These doctrines, be it remembered, form a pro-
 John i. 18. minent portion of those truths, which “the only-
 begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father” (in
 the intimate fellowship of his nature and counsels)
 1 Cor. ii. 11. “hath declared,” and “the Spirit, who alone knoweth
 the things of God,” hath inspired, with the express aim
 2 Tim. iii. 15. of “making us wise unto salvation”—of preparing
 us for life eternal in their presence. And though
 it becometh man, when searching the knowledge of
 the Most High, to be content with what God hath
 thought fit to disclose, and not to aim at being wise

above that which is written ; yet it must be a proper and salutary occupation for a being who has so noble a destiny in prospect, to raise his thoughts to the divine persons with whom he may come to converse “face to face;” and looking to the offices which they severally vouchsafe towards him here, to nourish within himself a deep sense of the obligations¹ which are thus derived to him. Nothing has been revealed for mere speculation, but everything for some practical end ; and the loftiest truths, for the noblest issues. I am persuaded that a chief cause why Christianity has so little hold upon the hearts of men and fails of its richest fruits, is, that they do not properly meditate upon these deep mysteries of the Gospel, and thereby invigorate and exalt in themselves both faith and love. “The secret things belong unto the Lord our God;” into such as he has reserved, it is not our business to pry. But “those things which are revealed belong unto us and unto our children for ever,” that we may study them and form our hearts thereto.

The great purpose of God’s dispensations has ever been, to recover man to holiness. And with only a little reflection, we cannot fail to discover how the contemplation of these sublime mysteries tends to weaken our attachment to the things of the world, and to advance the growth of moral excellence, and religious affections. Pride and self-sufficiency are humbled, under a sense of our immeasurable distance

¹ For the practical uses of this doctrine, see Waterland, vol. v. ch. ii. ; Pearson, pp. 179—183, and 390—392 ; Barrow, end of Sermon. “A Defence of the Blessed Trinity ;” Stillingfleet, vol. iii. 358—360.

from the Deity, the simplest properties of whose nature (and doubtless such alone are hinted to us) so much surpass the utmost grasp of our intelligence. And while the high thoughts of the proud are cast down, the lowly and dejected are raised to a more consolatory estimate of their own worth, unto whom a divine Trinity stoops to have respect, and whose welfare it deigns to regard. The low pleasures, the petty interests, the mean rivalries of the world, come to be viewed with a just contempt, under a glimpse of that light by which man discovers the elevated satisfactions of which his soul may become capable, through the indwelling of God. The degradation brought upon us by every sin, and the unfitness which it entails for our real good, are more fully felt, in proportion as the wonders of the Godhead, with which we are in relation and may hold communion even here, and to the open perception of which we may

1 John iii. 2. raise our hope in a future life, are made familiar to our minds. The folly as well as guilt of “grieving the Holy Spirit”—of preferring to his favour the grovelling delights and paltry ends by which the *evil Spirit* lures men to his service and their ruin—must strike remorsefully one occupied with the soul-stirring thought, of a heavenly Being dwelling in him, and seeking to purify his heart, that he may be meet for celestial glory. When the mind is deeply imbued with the knowledge, that as *God the Son* died to atone for us, *God the Holy Ghost* abideth with us for that other work of sanctification, without which the former will be unavailing; all vain imaginations of the harmlessness of sin, and of

Eph. iv. 30.

indiscriminate, universal salvation, die away; and it is confessed, that the required renewal of the soul to righteousness cannot be a trifling change, since God descendeth from heaven to aid in it. Hence he who discovers in himself no sign that he is a “new creature;” no sentiments, manners, tempers, inclinations, affections, which he can ascribe to a *divine* influence, or deem consistent with the divine inhabitation in him; must come to regard his position as full of danger, and hasten to fall down and pray urgently, that he may receive “the promise of the Spirit,” and “sanctification through him.” While to those who, measuring the vast distance of man’s corrupt heart from the pure nature of God, might, though panting and labouring after, yet despair of attaining unto his likeness; confidence will spring up from the reflection, that “greater is he that is in them, than he that is in the world;” and they will “abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.”

Gal. iii. 14.

2 Thess. ii. 13.

1 John iv. 4.

Rom. xv. 13.

When so much has been done for us, and by such exalted authors; when God created, God redeemed, and God doth inhabit that he may sanctify us; can the soul, for which the Almighty Father, Son, and Spirit, thus condescend to concern themselves, be a light thing?—the holiness to which they would retrieve us, a trifling excellence?—the wretchedness of hell, from which they would rescue us, an easy burden?—the blessedness of heaven, to which they would exalt us, a pearl of small account? Let us, prizing redemption by the dignity of its instruments, labour diligently, in all that is left dependent

on us, to attain unto it. Let us be brought to “work out our own salvation with fear and trembling,” by the very consideration which the apostle urges, that “it is God which worketh in us.” And imploring continually from the Father, pardon through his Son, and through the Holy Spirit, those “rivers of living water”—those perennial graces—by which we may “go from strength to strength,” and finally “in Zion appear before God;” let our hearts, in admiring and grateful adoration, break forth in the voice of praise and thanksgiving, in the ancient doxology which holds up the faith we now preach, as the belief of all ages; “Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it *was in the beginning*, is now, and ever shall be, world without end!” Amen!

John vii. 38,
39.

Ps. lxxxiv. 7.

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

SERMON I.

NOTE A. (p. 5.)

DR Whitby, in two publications at a late period of his life when he had adopted Arian views, insists upon it as an axiom, that "It is inconsistent with the justice and righteousness of God to require any man to believe, that is, assent to, what he does not, nor cannot, understand;" meaning thereby, that the doctrine of the Trinity, in the sense in which it has been held by the Church of Christ from the beginning, cannot properly be proposed to men as an article of necessary faith. (See his "ΥΣΤΕΡΑΙ ΦΡΟΝΤΙΔΕΣ, or Last Thoughts," p. 59, and elsewhere. Also his "Disquisitiones Modestæ" on Bishop Bull's "Def. Fid. Nic." to which latter work of Whitby Waterland refers, vol. i. 218.)

This is a favourite ground with those who dissent¹ from our doctrine. And it is well, therefore, to consider it attentively, in the very commencement of our inquiry. Now, however specious this maxim may appear at first sight, a little examination will shew that it is totally without foundation in truth, in the sense in which it is applied to the matter in hand. We are called upon in Scripture to be-

¹ Dr Lardner's language is something of the same tenor, but as against both the orthodox and the Arians. He assigns, as the recommendation of the Unitarian scheme, that "it is the *plainest*, and most *simple* of all." ("Posthumous Discourses, III. and IV, on the Trinity," vol. x.) Is this, then, a safe test of truth, especially as regards the nature of the Deity? Later Unitarians have gone beyond him, in the *simplicity* of their creed. (See note O.)

Mosheim says: "The fundamental opinion of the Socinians necessarily supposes, that no doctrine ought to be acknowledged as true in its nature or divine in its origin, *all whose parts* are not level to the comprehension of the human understanding." And he justly remarks; "Those who adopt this singular rule, must at the same time (on account of the great variety in the talents and capacities of different persons) grant, that the number of religions must be *nearly equal to that of individuals*." (Eccles. Hist. cent. xvi. Sect. iii. Pt. II. ch. iv. § 16.)

lieve, and we do believe, and believe on sure ground, many things which we “do not, and cannot understand;” if by “understand,” we mean, as it is here used, *conceive: i. e.* of which we can form no idea as to the *manner* of their being—of which we have only a *general* notion. And *such* notion we have of the *Trinity*. The substance of the doctrine (the *general truths* embraced by it) is plainly revealed, and is intelligible; though the *manner* of it, as of many other things we are most confidently assured of, is secret to us, and wholly inconceivable.

This question is fully discussed by Barrow, in his Sermon on Coloss. iii. 2, entitled, “A Defence of the Blessed Trinity;” by Tillotson, in his Sermon on 1 Tim. ii. 5, “Concerning the Unity of the Divine Nature;” and by Stillingfleet, in his Sermon on 1 Tim. i. 15, “The mysteries of the Christian Faith vindicated.” They entirely agree, both in the principle of reasoning, and in the conclusions at which they arrive. They shew, by many instances, that the mind entertains the firmest conviction on points which come before it no otherwise; viz. that the *being of God*, and his most certain *attributes* and *operations*, would be excluded from our creed, did we require to understand, before we can believe; that his spirituality, his self-existence, his eternity^a, his omnipresence at every instant, his foreknowledge, his creation of all things, his promised renewal of our existence¹ at the

^a See Dr S. Clarke, on the Being and Attributes of God, Prop. i.

¹ Mr Locke instances, among doctrines so plain as to be level to the understanding of an “illiterate countryman of England,” that “the dead shall rise.” Vol. vi. 240. And so it is, in a *general* way, as other difficult truths of Scripture are: but only so. He proceeds to say; “For he can conceive that the *same man*, who was dead and senseless, should be alive again, as well as he can that the same man, who is now in a *lethargy*, should be awake again.” And if he keeps his mind to the simple fact of *living again*, without considering the manner of renewing the same being, when the body shall have been corrupted, and its parts dispersed, this may be true. And this is what Mr Locke means: for he adds; “none of these *manners* of those actions being included in those propositions, the proposition concerning the *matter of fact* (if it imply no contradiction in it) may be believed.” But should the countryman once come to ask himself, *how the sameness* of the revived person is to be preserved, the truth would cease to be intelligible to him. In proof of which, we have only to refer to Mr Locke’s own chapter on “Personal Identity” (Hum. Und. B. II. ch. 27), and to his controversy with the Bishop of Worcester respecting it (wherein, though he might have the best of the argument, the very difference of opinion will shew the matter

resurrection—all present difficulties, when we come to look into them, like unto that which we experience in the doctrine of the Trinity; difficulties arising from the shortness of our knowledge and faculties, which are incompetent to descry the spiritual nature of God, his manner of existence and action. These men of deep and clear intellect, and sound philosophy, agree as to the folly of our attempting to judge what is possible in *his* nature, by a standard formed on material and sensible and finite objects. “It cannot be reasonable (says Barrow), out of principles laid down from ordinary experience about these most low and imperfect things, to collect, that there can be no other kind of unions and distinctions, of generations and processions, than such as our own gross sense doth represent to us. Reason itself more forcibly doth oblige us to think, that to sublimer beings there do pertain *modes of subsistence and action, unions and distinctions, influences and emanations*, of a more high and perfect kind, such as our coarse apprehension cannot adequate, nor our rude language express; which we perhaps have no faculty subtile enough to conceive distinctly, nor can attain any congruous principles, from which to discourse solidly about them.” They expose the folly of our presuming to make a distinction in matters so much above us, on points whereon our ignorance is equal, and our evidence one and the same: “If *all* concerning God (says Barrow again) be thus incomprehensible, why should any thing seem incredible? Why, out of so many inconceivable mysteries, do we choose *some*, and reprobate *others*? Wherefore do we

matter not to be clear to an “illiterate countryman”), and to Bishop Butler’s Dissertation, “Of Personal Identity.” St Paul knew the matter not to be easy, when considered as to the particular *manner*. Having proposed the difficulty; “Some man will say, *how* are the dead raised up, and with *what body* do they come?” he does not attempt a solution of it, but refers us to the omnipotence of God; requiring our belief of the *fact of a resurrection*, on the sufficient authority of his Gospel, though the manner of it be inexplicable.

1 Cor. xv. 35.

1 Cor. xv. 38,
51.

In the same way, if we shut out (as Mr Locke says we should do, in the above case) the consideration of the *manner*, concerning a Trinity in Unity, the proposition concerning the *matter of fact* is intelligible. We understand what is meant by unity, and by distinction: by “one substance,” and by “three Persons;” though we cannot conceive the *mode* in which three Persons subsist in one substance, because it is not a mode of which we have experience, in those existences which lie within our observation.

stretch our judgment beyond its limits, to things so infinitely exceeding it?" And they all agree, on grounds previously established, in a conclusion the very opposite to the dictum of Whitby; viz. (in the words of Stillingfleet) "That God may justly require from us, in general, the belief of what we cannot comprehend, especially if it *relates to himself*;" and in those of Tillotson; "I take it for an undoubted principle, which no man can gainsay, that to assure us that a thing really is, it is not necessary for us to know the *manner how* it is, or *can be*." And again: "It is not repugnant to reason, to believe some things which are incomprehensible by our reason, provided that we have sufficient ground and reason for our belief of them: especially if they be *concerning God*, who is in his nature incomprehensible, and we be well assured that he hath revealed them. And therefore it ought not to offend us, that these *differences* in the Deity are incomprehensible by our finite understandings; because the *divine nature itself is so*, and yet the belief of *that* is the *foundation of all religion*." And again, shortly after: "We are sufficiently assured that the Scriptures are a divine revelation, and that this mystery of the Trinity is therein declared to us. Now that we cannot comprehend it, is no sufficient reason not to believe it. For if this were a good reason for not believing it, then no man ought to believe that there is a God, because his nature is most certainly incomprehensible." And further, they justly represent, that we do not propose for belief any doctrine the *purport of which* we do not understand, nor any which involves a *contradiction* to reason. In the words of Stillingfleet: "We do not make that which we say is incomprehensible to be a necessary article of faith, *as it is incomprehensible*; but we do assert that which is incomprehensible as to the *manner*, may be a necessary article, *as far as it is plainly revealed*;" i. e. as to the *substance* of the doctrine.

Mr *Locke* fully and frequently admits, that "God, in giving us the light of *reason*, has not thereby tied up his own hands from affording us, when he thinks fit, the light of *revelation*;" that "whatever proposition is revealed, of whose truth our mind, by its natural faculties and notions, cannot judge, is matter of *faith*;" that "revelation, where

Serm. on
1 Tim. i. 15.

Serm. III. on
John i. 14.
Sect. II.

Serm. on
1 Tim. ii. 5.

Serm. on
1 Tim. i. 15.

Hum. Und.
B. iv. ch.
xviii. Sect.
8, 9.

God has been pleased to give it, must *carry it against the probable conjectures of reason.*" He repeatedly admits, in his letters to the Bishop of Worcester, that "we may have certainty on matters where our ideas are *obscure*, or even where we have *none at all.*" And (in arguing indeed on a different question) he affirms the very principle we are seeking to establish; "If this, says he, be a right rule of reasoning, to *deny a thing to be* because we *cannot conceive the manner how it comes to be*; I shall desire them who use it to stick to this rule, and see what work it will make both in divinity as well as philosophy." "Can you conceive how your own soul, or any substance thinks? You find indeed, that you do think: and so do I. But I want to be told how the action of thinking is performed: this, I confess, is beyond my conception; and I would be glad if any one, who conceives it, would explain it to me." And yet more pertinently to our topic: "If God cannot join things together by *connexions* inconceivable to us, we must deny even the consistency and being of *matter itself.*"

Works, vol.
III. p. 18.

2nd reply to
the Bishop
of Worcester,
Works,
vol. III. 460
—466.

The following remarks of Dr Waterland upon the same important question, are so apposite, that I cannot scruple to quote them at length.

"It may be suggested, that the doctrine is not clear, with regard to the matter of it: it is mysterious doctrine. Be it so: the tremendous Deity is all over mysterious, in his nature and in his attributes, in his works and ways. It is the property of the divine Being to be unsearchable: and if he were not so, he would not be divine. Must we therefore reject the most certain truths concerning the Deity, only because they are incomprehensible, when every thing almost belonging to him must be so of course? If so, there is an end, not only of all *revealed* religion, but of *natural* religion too: and we must take our last refuge in downright atheism. There are mysteries in the works of nature, as well as in the Word of God; and it is as easy to believe both, as one. We do not mean by mysteries, positions wholly unintelligible, or that carry *no idea at all* with them: we do not mean unsensed characters, or empty sounds: but we mean propositions contained in *general* terms, which convey as *general* ideas, not descending to *particulars*. The ideas are clear as far as they

Vol. v. ch. i.

go: only they do not reach far enough to satisfy curiosity. They are ideas of *intellect*, for the most part; like the ideas we form of our own souls: for *spiritual* substance at least (if any¹ substance) falls not under imagination, but must be *understood* rather than *imagined*. The same is the case with many abstract verities, in *numbers* especially: which are not the less verities for being purely intellectual, and beyond all *imagery*. Reason contemplates them, and clearly too, though *fancy* can lay no hold of them, to draw their picture in the mind. Such, I say, are our ideas of the divine Being, and of a Trinity in Unity; ideas of *intellect*, and *general*; intelligible as far as the thing is revealed, and assented to so far as intelligible. We understand the *general* truths, concerning a *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*; we understand the general nature of an *union* and a *distinction*; and what we understand, we believe. As to the minute particulars relating to the *manner* or *modus* of the thing, we understand them not: our ideas reach not to them, but stop short in the *generals*, as our *faith* also does. For our faith and our ideas keep pace with each other; and we believe nothing about *particulars* whereof nothing is revealed, neither expressly, nor *consequentially*."

"Such a general assent as I have mentioned, is what we give to the truth of the divine perfections—necessary existence, eternity, ubiquity, prescience, and the like. Whatever obscurity or defect there is in our ideas of those divine attributes, we think it no good reason for denying either the *general* truths, or the *importance* of them." &c.

"It has been sometimes objected, that however clear the doctrine may seem to men of parts and learning, yet certainly it cannot be so to *common* Christians. But why not to *common* Christians, as well as to others? It is as clear to them as most other high and divine things can be. It is as clear, for instance, as the divine *eternity*, or *omnipresence*. Every common Christian, professing Father, Son, and Holy Ghost to be *so distinct as not to be one the other*, and *so united as to be one God*, has as clear an idea of what

¹ See extract from Mr Locke, p. 170, note.

he says, as when he prays; "Our Father, which art in heaven"; or when he repeats after the Psalmist, "Thou art about my path and about my bed, and spiest out all my ways." And, I am persuaded, upon examination, he will be able to give as good an account of the one, as he will of the other. The thing is plain and intelligible in either case; but in the *general* only, not as to the *particular manner*. Ask *how* three are one, and probably both catechumen and catechist will be perfectly at a nonplus: or ask *how* God is in heaven, and *how* about our path, or our bed², and they will both be equally confounded."

Dr W. instances the same kind of difficulty in other admitted and necessary attributes of the Deity; and, having shewn that the doctrine is clear as to the *matter*, he proceeds to shew that it is also clear as to the *proof*, and concludes thus:—

"Scripture in its plain, natural, obvious, unforced meaning, says it, and reason does not gainsay it: upon these two pillars our cause rests. Upon this bottom Bishop Bull fixes it: *The Anti-Trinitarians can never produce a demonstrative reason to prove that it cannot be, and divine Revelation assures us that so it is.*" Works, vol. v. ch. 1. See also first and second Def. of Qu. xxi. (vol. I and III).

NOTE B. (p. 5.)

THE word "person," as applied to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, severally, has been made a ground of cavil. And as it is employed, in reference to them, with some difference from the notion commonly attached to it, it may be well to give some explanation of it, and of the word "substance," used in connection with it.

² This question involves some difficult points as to the nature and properties of the divine substance. See Waterland's first Def. of Qu. xxi; and Barrow's Sermon, Sect. 6; Wardlaw, Disc. 1.

Substance¹ is the foundation of being; the substratum, or subject, in which qualities and attributes subsist. Difference of substance makes distinction of nature.

Stillington, III. 590.

Id. III. 511.

Id. III. 611.

"A *person*, is an *intelligent* substance, with a peculiar manner of subsistence." (By "peculiar manner of subsistence," is meant, "something which doth distinguish it from another intelligent substance, in the same nature"—*i. e.* a separate consciousness, will, powers, relations, &c.)

Hum. Und. B. II. ch. XXVII. Sect. 9.

Such is Bishop Stillington's definition. Mr Locke's is; "A thinking, intelligent being, that has reason and reflection,

¹ The following is an extract from Mr Locke's chapter, "Of our complex Ideas of Substances."

Hum. Und. B. II. ch. XXIII. Sect. 4 and 5.

"When we talk or think of any particular sort of corporeal substances, as horse, stone, &c. though the idea we have of either of them be but the complication or collection of those several simple ideas of sensible qualities, which we used to find united in the thing called horse or stone; yet because we cannot conceive how they should subsist alone, or one in another, we suppose them existing in and supported by some common subject; which support we denote by the name *substance*, though it be certain we have no *clear or distinct* idea of that thing we suppose a support.

"The same thing happens concerning the operations of the *mind*, viz. thinking, reasoning, fearing, &c. which we, concluding not to subsist of themselves, nor apprehending how they can belong to any *body*, or be produced by it, we are apt to think these the actions of some *other substance*, which we call *spirit*; whereby yet it is evident, that having no other idea or notion of *matter*, but something wherein those many sensible qualities which affect our senses do subsist; by supposing a substance, wherein thinking, knowing, doubting, and a power of moving, &c. do subsist, we have as clear a notion of the substance of *spirit*, as we have of *body*; the one being supposed to be (*without knowing what it is*) the substratum to those simple ideas we have from *without*; and the other supposed (*with a like ignorance of what it is*) to be the substratum to those operations we experiment in ourselves *within*. It is plain then, that the idea of corporeal substance in *matter* is as remote from our conceptions and apprehensions, as that of spiritual substance, or *spirit*; and therefore from our not having any notion of the substance of *spirit*, we can no more conclude its *non-existence* than we can for the same reason deny the existence of *body*; it being as rational to affirm there is no *body*, because we have no *clear and distinct* idea of the substance of *matter*, as to say that there is no *spirit*, because we have no *clear or distinct* idea of the substance of *spirit*."

There is necessarily some such *substratum*, or support, to the *Divine* subsistence and attributes—some *spiritual substance*, infinite and eternal, the foundation of being, in God; and doubtless differing from all other spiritual substances (as of our souls, and of angels, and of all finite and created natures), though, not having any idea at all of the nature of substances, we cannot tell wherein the distinction consists. For we must have some notion of things, before we can compare them, and discern differences in them.

and that can consider itself as itself, the same thinking being in different times and places."

This definition has rather respect to the identity of the same man, at different periods, than to the matter in hand.

Dr Waterland's definition of a "person" is; "An intelligent agent, having the distinctive characters of I, thou, and he; and not divided nor distinguished into more intelligent agents capable of the same characters."

Second Def.
of Qu. xv.

He intends hereby a *single* intelligent agent, and would exclude, as he explains himself, an *army*, a *senate*; neither of which, though it may be called an "intelligent agent," is "a person," because *divided into more*. And so also the *Trinity*, which, though in a particular respect *one*, is not "a person," because *distinguished into more intelligent agents than one*.

After either of these definitions, an *angel* is a person: a *man* is a person; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, *each* a person.

An *angel* is "an intelligent substance," *single*, incorporeal, with a "peculiar manner of subsistence"—(a separate consciousness, &c.) and so, a "person"—A *man* is compounded of *two* substances, a corporeal and an incorporeal; a body and a soul. This different condition might, at first view, seem inconsistent with the character of "a person." But we find these two substances united (without mixture, and without any change in either) so entirely and intimately, as to constitute one "manner of subsistence"—a *distinct, single* consciousness, will, &c.—all that properly constitutes a "person"—a *single agent*. Every man is convinced of his *individuality*—that he is *one*.

Still-
fleet's Def.

Thus it is seen, that while "substance" is necessary to constitute "a person," *personality* rather depends on a "*peculiar manner of subsistence*"—(a separate consciousness, will, relations, &c.), and can consist with some variety of circumstances, as to *substance*.

This union of two substances in one "person," of the *manner* of which we cannot form the slightest notion, should teach us how ignorant we are of the nature and properties of substances, and of what is, or is not, possible, with respect to them; and should prevent our feeling any difficulty

as to any propositions touching them, which come to us on the authority of divine revelation, whether directly, or by a just inference.

John i. 14.

It is, for instance, the clear doctrine of Scripture, that “the Word was made flesh”—that Christ was both *God* and *man*; that, as a man comprises *two* substances in *one person*, Christ united to both a *third*—that of his proper *deity*—in perfect and indissoluble union, without^b mixture and without change in any of them; yet so intimately, as to constitute “a person,” a *single agent*, and not “divided or distinguished into *more*.” As such, he is continually represented in Scripture by the singular pronouns, I, thou, and he; and by every form of speech characteristic of a single agent—a *person*.

^b Pearson, 201; Bull, D. F. N. Sect. 2. c. viii. n. 3, 4.

See Waterland's Defin.

We have in *ourselves*, as has just been seen, some analogy by which to arrive at a *general* notion of the possibility of such a union. We know of something bearing a general resemblance to it. The comparison throws *some* light upon the truth, and accordingly is employed in one of our Creeds for this end: “As the reasonable soul and flesh is one man (*one person*), so God and man is one Christ” (*one person*). It is not meant to assert, that the *manner* of union is the *same* in the two cases; for we know not what it is in either; but that as it is real, so as to constitute unity of person, in the one case, though inconceivable; so it clearly may be in the other, though involved in the same obscurity.

Athan. Creed. See Tillotson, Sermon III. on John i. 14.

But we have not yet entered upon the difficulty originally alluded to, respecting the application of the term “*person*” to each member of the Trinity.

Waterl. III. 399.

In *finite* natures, each “person” is not only a distinct *agent*, but a distinct *substance* also. In *ourselves*, each individual has a substance, both of body and soul, *circumscribed and separate* from all others. And as our familiar notions, and the language by which we express them, are framed upon our observation and experience, a *distinction of substance* enters into our *ordinary* meaning, when we speak of “a *person*.”

But we have no sufficient ground for concluding that in *all* natures, personal distinction necessarily requires the *same* circumstances as to *substance*. We have already noticed *one* variety. We have now to present another.

The *Divine* substance, self-existent, infinite, and immutable, differs in its properties from all finite and created substances, as we might expect. It is incapable of division or multiplication. Without either, it is the support or foundation of being to *three agents*, distinct *as such*. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, have each a “peculiar manner of subsistence”—a separate consciousness, will, powers, relations, &c.—but not each a distinct *substance*. They subsist in *one common substance*, *communicated* from the Father—*derived* by the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

Still. Disc.
on the Tr.
ch. vii.

Thus, after the above *definitions* of person, each member of the Trinity is a “*person* :” but there is not in them an exact correspondence to this term, after our *customary*¹ and *familiar* notion of it. Hence, having no term representing distinction in the “manner of subsistence,” *with their peculiarity*; when we express this distinction in them by the word ‘*person*,’ we, for greater accuracy and clearness, add a qualification of it, and describe the holy Trinity as ‘*three persons*, but of *one substance*.’ The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, while “three intelligent agents,” and, as such, distinguished from each other in Scripture by singular pronouns, separately employed of each, and by every form of language characteristic of distinct agents, are not “*three persons*,” after the manner of *men*; for they subsist in *one and the same undivided substance*. They are not *one person*, as, in *man’s* nature, *unity of substance* agrees to *one person*; for in the *one divine substance* are *three* different and “peculiar manners of sub-

¹ “The word *Person* is not to be understood in its usual sense, but as a term borrowed from common language, and used in a sense not very remote from its usual sense, to express a distinction, which must be expressed in some way, and of which we have no clear comprehension.” Hey’s *Lectures*, B. iv. Art. i. § 7. Compare the end of Waterland’s Second Def. of Qu. xv.

Tillotson says: “Though the word ‘*Person*’ be not there (in Scripture) expressly applied to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, yet it will be very hard to find a more convenient word, whereby to express the *distinction* of these *Three*: for which reason I could never see any just cause to quarrel at this term. For since the Holy Spirit of God in Scripture, hath thought fit in speaking of these *Three* to distinguish them from one another, as we use in common speech to distinguish *three* several *Persons*, I cannot see any reason why, in the explication of this mystery, which purely depends upon *Divine Revelation*, we should not speak of it in the same manner as the *Scripture* doth.” (And again, in Sermon 11, on John i. 14, to much the same purport.)

Serm. on
1 Tim. ii. 5.

sistence"—three agents, distinguished each from the other—"three persons."

Bull, D. F.
N. Sect. II.
c. ix. n. 11.
Ridley's M.
Lect. pp. 39,
40, note.
Stillington,
Disc. on the
Trin. ch. vii.

This kind of difficulty necessarily arises, when language is to be accommodated to a nature differing, in some particulars, from any hitherto described by it. Words must, in the first instance, be used in a somewhat novel sense, and hence cause perplexity, until the new purport be settled. Accordingly, a like want of appropriate terms led to the same inconvenience in the Greek and Latin tongues, when first the relations of the Holy Trinity were treated of in them. And until particular terms, denoting personality and substance, came to be understood to have a peculiar meaning when applied to this subject, much misapprehension arose; and hence, for awhile, dissension, even among those who in reality agreed in doctrine; viz. between the eastern and western Churches.

The real difficulty, however, lies, after all, not so much in the language, as in the *doctrine* represented by it. We have no experience of *different persons* subsisting in *one and the same undivided substance*, and are not able to conceive the *manner* of such subsistence.

Tillotson,
Serm. on
1 Tim. ii. 5.

But "it ought to satisfy us, that there is sufficient evidence that this doctrine is delivered in Scripture, and that what is there declared concerning it doth not imply a contradiction. For why should our finite understandings pretend to comprehend that which is infinite, or to know all the *real differences* that are consistent with the *unity* of an infinite being; or to be able fully to explain this mystery by any similitude or resemblance taken from *finite beings*?" "It is not repugnant to reason to believe a great many things to be, of the manner of whose existence we are not able to give a particular and distinct account. And much less is it repugnant to reason, to believe those things *concerning God* which we are very well assured he hath declared concerning himself, though these things by our reason should be incomprehensible."

The fact is, as Mr Locke states in the extract just made from him, we understand *nothing* of the nature of substances. We safely conclude that there must be something, the foundation of being, in which properties and powers inhere; but

we can image nothing of it to our fancy. To use the distinction which Waterland adopts in the passage quoted from him in the preceding note, we have ideas of *intellect* respecting substances, but not of *imagination*; *general* ideas, but not *particular*. We understand that they must exist, but can frame no notion of them in the mind.

This is true as to *all* substances, and as to our own, whether of body or of soul. It may well, then, be true, respecting the boundless and transcendent substance of the Deity. Here our ignorance is complete. Hence we cannot be competent to judge what is possible, or what is impossible in it, by our *mere reason*. For to know what is possible, or impossible in it, from *reason*, we must have a notion of its nature, which we have not. We have the testimony of revelation *for* our doctrine, and none from reason *to oppose to it*. It is a case in which our implicit assent to Scripture is, on every ground, reasonably due.

Thus thought Dr S. Clarke, before he fell away, in his later age, like his disciple Dr Whitby, from the juster views which he had previously maintained with so much strength of argument: "As to the diversity of persons in that one and the same nature; *i.e.* whether in the *unity of the divine nature* there may not co-exist with the first supreme cause such emanations from it as may themselves be equally eternal, infinite, and perfect, by an *absolute and complete communication* of all the *divine attributes* in an infinite and perfect degree, excepting only that of self-origination; as there is nothing in bare reason by which it can be *demonstrated* that there *is* actually any such thing, so neither is there any argument, by which it can be proved *impossible*, or *unreasonable to be supposed*. And therefore, when declared and made known to us by clear revelation, it ought to be believed."

Scripture, it is true, does not formally combine, or expressly lay down, in set terms, the properties which we describe by, "three persons, of one substance." Yet if (as

See Locke,
Hum. Und.
B. iv. ch.
xvii. Sect. 9;
and ch. xviii.
Sect. 8 and 9.

Quoted by
Potter, p. 26.

Hey, B. iv.
Art. xi.
Sect. 21.

¹ "Though neither the word *Trinity*, nor perhaps *person*, in the sense in which it is used by divines when they treat of this mystery, be anywhere to be met with in Scripture; yet it cannot be denied but that *three* are there spoken of

sequentially what we put together and declare in these terms, our creed is that of Scripture. For it is *propositions*¹, and not mere terms, that are matter of faith.

Now it will be found that Scripture represents—

1. The distinction of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, to be a *real* distinction, as of so many agents.

2. The Godhead of each, as real and perfect.

3. The unity of God, as a real unity.

But if the distinction be real, they are three “persons.”

If the Godhead of each be real, they are *in nature like*, and *equal*.

If the unity of the Godhead be real, seeing there are in it three divine persons, the unity must be found in the substance.

For if they were distinct both as to *person* and to *substance*, they would be three Gods, just as *men* are three. There would be no natural ground of unity left, substance and manner of subsistence making together the whole being.

Disc. on the
Trin. ch. v.
(vol. iii. 451),
where see
more from
Augustin.

“The divine *essence* (or substance—as Stillingfleet sums up the reasoning of Augustin) is that alone which makes God. That can be but *one*, and therefore there can be no more Gods than *one*. But because the same Scripture, which assures us of the unity of the divine essence, doth likewise join the Son and Holy Ghost in the same *attributes, operations, and worship*; therefore, as to the mutual relations, we may reckon *three*; but as to the divine essence, there can be no more than *one*.”

Vol. I. 229. We do not pretend to *extend our knowledge* by such language. “The design (says Waterland) of these terms

of by the names of *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, in whose name every *Christian* is baptized, and to each of whom the highest *titles and properties* of *God* are in *Scripture* attributed: and these three are spoken of with as much distinction from one another, as *we use to speak of three several persons*.”

Tillotson,
Serm. on
1 Tim. ii. 5.

“The Scriptures do deliver this doctrine of the Trinity without *any manner of doubt or question* concerning the *Unity* of the *divine nature*; and not only so, but do most stedfastly and constantly assert that there is but *one God*.”

¹ Socinus tells F. Davides, who objected, *that the terms ESSENCE and PERSON were not in Scripture*, “that they exposed their cause who went upon such grounds; and that if the *sense of them* were in *Scripture*, it was no matter whether the *terms* were, or not.” See Stillingfleet, III. 468.

is not to enlarge our views, or to add any thing to our stock of ideas; but to secure the plain, fundamental truth, that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are strictly *divine* and *uncreated*, and yet are not *three* Gods, but *one* God."

However impossible for us to conceive the manner of such distinction of persons and communion of substance, it is not impossible, or even difficult for us, to understand what is meant by these terms, or consequently to *believe* it, seeing it is a legitimate conclusion from the language of Scripture. Certainly no *contradiction* to our natural reason is involved herein: for the distinction and union, the plurality and unity, do not relate to the *same* point. It is not asserted, that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are *three*, in the *same respect* in which they are *one*; but "three with regard to the *personal subsistence*—(i. e. relation, consciousness, &c., all that is characteristic of *distinct agents*), *one* in respect of the nature and *substance*; a Trinity of persons, but an Unity of essence." Potter, sect. III.

That no *contradiction to reason*² is involved herein, may be inferred from the fact, that something of a similar distinction and union in the nature of the Deity, entered into the speculations of the acutest philosophers of heathen antiquity; speculations the fruit of profound thought in master minds, though the original hint of such a doctrine Tillotson, Sermon on 1 Tim. ii. 5. Prop. iv. See also note N.

² The "learned and cautious Dr Cudworth" (as Locke styles him) thus closes his statement of the doctrine of a Trinity in Unity.

"We shall conclude here with confidence, that the Christian Trinity, though there be very much of mystery in it, yet is there nothing at all of plain *contradiction* to the undoubted principles of human reason, that is, of *impossibility*, to be found therein." Intellect. Syst. c. IV. (works, III. 59, 60.)

Archbishop Tillotson, whose learning, and good sense, and candour, were also highly prized by Mr Locke, thus expresses his like judgment.

"Now let any man shew any plain and downright *contradiction* in all this, or any other *difficulty* besides this, that the particular manner of the existence of these three *differences*, or *Persons*, in the *Divine nature*, expressed in Scripture by the names of *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost*, is *incomprehensible* by our *finite* understandings, and *inexplicable* by us: in which I do not see what absurdity there is; since our adversaries (he alludes to the Socinians) cannot deny, that many things certainly are, the particular *manner of whose existence* we can neither comprehend nor explain." He then proceeds to shew, that the opinion of those same adversaries "hath greater difficulties, and more palpable absurdities, following from it." Sermon. II. on John i. 14.

was doubtless obtained by them from the antient Jewish Scriptures, and the Jewish opinions grounded on them.

It may be thought, that since this language teaches no more than that "the Father is God, the Son God, the Holy Ghost God, and all *one God* ; and yet the Father is not the Son nor Holy Ghost, nor either of them the Father," it might have been better not to depart from these simpler terms. And so perhaps it might have been, so long as Christians received the instruction of Scripture, in honest simplicity of interpretation, and there was a unity of faith, in agreement therewith. But when men, retaining the *words* of Scripture, speculated and dogmatized *against their true sense*, more precise language became necessary, to put down their inventions, and preserve the real doctrine of Revelation¹.

Waterland, vol. v. 345. See Stillingfleet, iii. 450, 451, from St Augustine.

See Serm. iv. note K.

¹ Hey says: "After all, though the expression of our Church seems defensible and justifiable, yet I can conceive a very well-meaning and a thinking man to say, 'had not such obscure and difficult expressions better be avoided?' I should answer, 'yes:' but only in the same sense in which I should say, all *wars* and all *law-suits* had better be avoided; that is, without meaning to blame every prince who enters into war, or every private man who engages in a law-suit. The truth seems to be, that such expressions as we are apt to be shocked at, or discontented with, have been adopted only in the way of *defence*: and it is of consequence to be aware of this; because the meaning of expressions, in such forms as Articles of Religion, depends upon the *occasions* on which they were made, and the *errors* which they were intended to obviate." Lect. B. iv. Art. 11. sect. 21. Comp. Berriman, 307, 308.

Dr Pye Smith, in his Sermon on "the Personality and Divinity of the Holy Spirit," after observing, that language must be incapable of properly representing what we have no clear notion of, and what has no counterpart in any nature we are acquainted with, proceeds to say;

"In the mean time, for the adjusting and harmonizing of our knowledge as at present to be attained, for the satisfaction of upright enquiry, and for the vindication of truth against those who unhappily misunderstand, or pervert, or oppose it, there is, at least, utility in the adoption of compendious expressions as the exponents of what would otherwise require tedious circumlocution. What, then, is the most useful and unexceptionable term, for expressing this relation or mode of subsistence in the unsearchable essence of God?

"The terms *person* and *personality* have been the most generally adopted. To different and judicious divines some other word has appeared preferable: as *hypostasis*, *subject*, and *subsistence*. Perhaps, if it were left to our choice, and if we could, without inconvenience, so far alter the established language of theology, the word *subsistence* would be the least liable to misapprehension. But, whatever form of expression be employed, our meaning is—that, *in the one living and true God*, there are, by necessity of nature, and in a way of subsistence to us unknown, *three conscious individualities*, in the *oneness of essence*.

It was the first intention of those who drew up the Nicene Creed, as an expression of the truth of Scripture, and of the original and constant faith of the Church, against the heresy of the Arians (who, owning Christ for God, applied the term to him in a sense unknown to Scripture, making him to be of an *inferior nature* to the Father, and really a *creature*), "to make use only of Scripture words and phrases." But it was found that the Arians would not scruple to equivocate, and to adopt the language, with a secret reservation as to its meaning. Hence the form of expression, "of *one substance* with the Father," already in familiar^c use among christian writers, was selected, as affirming the real divinity of the Saviour, after the true purport of Scripture, with a closeness and directness which they could not elude. See Stillingfleet's "Disc. on the Trin." Pref. and ch. v. vi. vii. x.; Waterland's second Def. of Qu. v. xv. xxiii.; Potter, sect. iii.; Bull, D. F. N. sect. ii. particularly c. i. and the conclusion of the work; Barrow's Sermon, "Defence of the Blessed Trinity;" Hey's Lect. B. iv. Art. i. and Art. ii. sect. 21; Wall's Inf. Bapt. Part ii. c. v.; Berriman, Sermon. iii. iv.; Dr Gill, ch. i. and iii.; Horsley, xvth Letter to Priestley. (Tracts 286, 7).

Cudworth,
iii. 157.

^c Bull, D.
F. N. sect.
ii. c. i. J.
E. C. c. vi.
n. 21, 22;
Wall's Inf.
Bapt. ii.
350—353;
Berriman,
Sermon. iv.

The subject here handled is of much importance. It involves the real ground of the objections which are entertained to our doctrine. There can be no reasonable question on which side lies the weight of *scriptural* testimony. The difficulty is mainly *metaphysical*; i. e. whether the perfect divinity of the Son and the Holy Ghost can be consistent with the unity of God; whether the one divine "substance" is capable of three "manners of subsistence"—of being communicated, without division, by the Father to the Son and the Holy Spirit.

The opponents of the doctrine of the Trinity having, upon the mere authority of reason, on a subject on which reason is necessarily in complete ignorance and incapable of judging (viz. the properties of substance, and especially

We follow the ancients in calling these conscious individualities *persons*, because we find the language of personal distinction freely used in the Scriptures." pp. 32, 33.

of the *divine* substance), determined this question in the negative; then seek to warp Scripture to the several doctrines which they substitute for ours after their respective fancies, on this mere presumption. Their systems are not *originally suggested* by Scripture, but *sought* in Scripture when taken up on other grounds. Scripture is either wrested to an agreement with them, or rejected where it cannot be made to yield.

The Arian objections will be found in the later work of Dr Whitby already referred to, his “ΥΣΤΕΡΑΙ¹ ΦΡΟΝΤΙΔΕΣ, or Last Thoughts.” They will be seen to rest chiefly on metaphysical ground, viz. whether the notions of “person” and “being” be co-extensive; which he takes for granted they are, though it is the very point at issue. He had previously² declared *Scripture*, and the opinions of the *early Christian Fathers*, to be on the side of the *Trinitarian* views. We hold that in the divine nature there may be three *persons*, who are not three entirely distinct *beings*, as three *men* are distinct; but who, while distinct as *agents*, have a natural ground of *unity*, by subsisting in one common substance. We hold this, not as the discovery of reason, or as intelligible to reason as *to the manner*, even when *revealed*; but as a necessary consequence from the two clear doctrines of Scrip-

¹ Waterland states the reasoning of Whitby's other Arian work to be similar. I have not been able to procure a copy of it, there being none in the Library of the University. Such also was that of Waterland's own opponent Mr Jackson. The objections of Dr S. Clarke, whose opinions misled Dr Whitby (at a late period of his life), rest on the same grounds. See Potter in reply to him, Sect. III. See also Tillotson, Sermon II. on John i. 14, as to Socinus. See also the “Life of Waterland,” by Bishop Van Mildert.

² “In Chartis, sive Libellis nuper editis, quæ ad manus nostras pervenerunt, Socini vel Arianæ hæresin (sic enim post Ecclesiæ Christianæ, per omnia sæcula, judicium, loqui fas est) infelicitè renovatam, et obnixè propagatam, solitudine haud modica conspexi. Sperassem, &c.

“Estque id vobis imprimis gratulandum, in hisce chartis confidentiæ et ignorantiae plus satis conspicuum esse, argumentorum vero est mira parsimonia, rationis acumen exiguum, ecclesiasticæ historiæ deflenda inscitia, antiquitatis primævæ ignorantia crassa, aut saltem in ea contemnenda, et quasi exsibilanda, perniciosa protervia; quæ quidem ne à me vel temerè profusa, vel præter rationem dicta videantur, tria hæc conabor, ea quæ par est evidentiæ, nec minori compendio, præstare, &c.

“Veram Christi Deitatem certis, clarisque Argumentis ex Sacræ Scripturæ repositoio desumptis, atque perpetuo patrum Ante-Nicænorum suffragio stabilitis, confirmabo,” &c. Tract. c. i.

ture, the equal divinity of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and the unity of God. Reason receives these truths at the hand of God, on the sufficient warranty of his truth, and is incompetent either to confirm or to question them by its own light; because, being wholly ignorant as to the properties of the divine nature, it cannot know what is possible, or what is not possible, with respect to it.

The Arians venture to reject our doctrine, in reliance upon reason thus uninstructed and incompetent. They assert (without proof) on this authority, that our doctrine is inconsistent with the possibilities of the divine nature: that if we believe the equal nature of the Father Son and Holy Ghost, there is no middle path between believing them to be but *one person*, with three *mere names*, and believing them to be three wholly distinct and independent Gods; i. e. between Sabellianism and Tritheism.

See Water-land, Def. of Qu. xxii. xxiii.

See note O.

But our doctrine is neither one, nor the other. By the assertion of *three distinct persons*, we reject the one of these systems; by the assertion of *one substance*, the other.

Mr Channing, the celebrated American Unitarian, does not seem to have acquainted himself with the Trinitarian scheme, which he rejects; at least his description would not convey a just view of it to those whom he was addressing. He holds us up as *confessedly* Sabellians and Patri-passians; as believing that "Jesus, who was born at Bethlehem; who eat, drank, and slept; who *suffered* and was *crucified*, &c.; that this Jesus was the supreme God himself, and the *same being with his Father* (not alluding at all to the distinction which we draw between *being* and *person*). Dr Lardner, better informed, or more candid, gives a juster statement of our doctrine. See Channing, vol. I. Appendix, "Objections to Unitarian doctrines considered." For Dr Lardner, see Posth. Disc^s. On the Trinity. Disc. I. (vol. x.)

See note O.

NOTE C. (p. 7.)

So Exod. xx. 3, 5, "Thou shalt have no other Gods *before me*." (The Septuagint renders $\pi\lambda\eta\nu\ \epsilon\mu\omicron\upsilon$, "*beside me*," but laxly. The original answers to, "*ad facies meas*,"—in

Dodd's Bible.

my sight): "Thou shalt not *bow down* thyself to them, nor serve them."

Again, Exod. xxii. 20, "He that sacrificeth unto any god, save unto the Lord only, he shall be utterly destroyed." So also Ps. lxxxi. 9, "There shall no strange God be in thee, neither shalt thou worship any strange God." All others

2 Kings xix. are declared to be "*no gods*."

18.

1 Cor. viii.

4.

It is clear from these and other texts of a like tenour which abound throughout Scripture, that he alone is to be worshipped, who is strictly, and in the *only true* sense, *God*; viz. "The Lord our Maker." It is impossible to reconcile with them the command to worship Christ, unless as he is also *strictly* God; or to reconcile his being so with the asserted *unity* of God, unless by regarding him as of one substance with the Father, agreeably to his own intimation;

Ps. xc. 6.

John v. 23.

John x. 30.

See note O.

"I and my Father are one." The *Arian* scheme, which, calling Christ God, supposes him to be of a nature inferior to the Father, and of a *created substance*, makes him, if God at all, altogether *another* God; one totally *different from* the Father, as well as *distinct*. As such, he would be excluded from worship by the above texts. But the *existence* of any such *secondary* God is also constantly and unreservedly denied.

Isa. xxxvii.

16, 19.

Comp. Jer.

x. 11.

See note O.

The *Socinian* scheme, which owns Christ as God, but only by *office*, and as exercising a *present dominion* over the world, and on this ground requires the worship of him, while by nature a mere man—is equally at variance with the above texts, which strictly forbid worship save to the "Lord who made heaven and earth." There is no hint of the permission of any *inferior, secondary* worship.

These texts furnish the Jews with an unanswerable argument against the truth of Christianity, if truly represented by either the Arian or Socinian theory; which both allow to "serve the *creature* besides the Creator."

Rom. i. 25.

This argument, respecting the Jews, is formally stated by Whitby, Tract, c. i. sect. xxx.

On the general matter here treated, see the beginning of his Tract; also Waterland, first and second Def. of Qu. i. and ii. xvi. and xvii. and Pref. to vol. ii.; Potter, Sect. iv.; Bull, Pr. et Ap. Tr. c. vi.

NOTE D. (p. 14.)

Whether we infer the dignity of the Saviour from the greatness and extent of the evil which he came to remedy by his death, or the offensiveness of our sins, by the exalted nature of him who "gave himself for them," there is at any rate a striking harmony in the language of Scripture on these points. The declaration of the apostle, "It is not possible that the blood of *bulls* and of *goats* should take away sins," implies at once the magnitude of the mischief, the necessity of some intrinsic and proportionate excellence in the atoning sacrifice, and the suitable worth of that which was offered. To much the same purport are those other texts: "We are bought with a *price*"—"with the precious blood of Christ:" "It is Christ that died." Though it was the nature of *man alone* which *suffered*, yet it was by virtue of its union with the divine that it acquired such a surpassing dignity, as to render the sufferings of *one*, an adequate reparation for the offences of all.

Gal. i. 4.

Heb. x. 4.

1 Cor. vi. 20.

1 Pet. i. 19.

Rom. viii. 34.

See Pearson, p. 180.

It is not pretended to assert, on the authority of *reason*, that a great atonement was *necessary*, as a satisfaction to the justice and holiness of God, in such a sense as that the infinite wisdom of God could not have brought about the salvation of man in any other way: we know too little of the considerations which influenced the divine mind, and made it seem good to require this expiation. All we contend is, that the language of Scripture seems to intimate this necessity, and that such an appointment is *answerable to our natural apprehension*.

Suppose, what is clearly possible, that some manifestation of the hatefulness of sin to God was seen by him to be useful, whether for man himself, or for other orders¹ of beings (and many such may exist and be cognizant of human affairs); then, if the *whole race* of sinners was to be forgiven, some *eminent* substitute might be required, in order to display, by his worth and his sufferings on their behalf, the mischief

¹ This seems agreeable to Mr Locke's views. (Reasonableness of Christianity, Works, v. vi. 134).

of sin, and the difficulty of their deliverance¹. The whole language of Scripture shews that sin is of far more importance in the sight of God than in ours, and that the pardon of it was a matter of no light consideration. (See Tillotson's Sermon on Heb. ix. 26, "Concerning the Satisfaction of Christ;" Stillingfleet's Discourses on the Satisfaction of Christ, vol. III. of his works; Waterland, vol. v. 37—40, and 241—244; Bull, J. E. C. c. VII. n. 5.

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1834.

This view of the necessity of some proportion between the price of atonement and the gravity and extent of the offences to be expiated, is so consonant to reason, that they who deny the divine nature of the Redeemer commonly reject also the notion of his having made any *satisfaction* to the justice of God, and borne adequate testimony to his holiness, by dying on the cross. See Toulmin's Life of Socinus, ch. iii. sect. II.; Rees's Racovian Catechism, Sect. v. ch. viii. and Sect. VI.; Stillingfleet's Pref. and Part II. ch. iii. of the Discourses above referred to; and Berriman, p. 411, for the views of the Socinians: and Rees, as above; Channing's Works, vol. I. 418—26, 573—5, and Bishop Burgess' Tracts, 54, 73, for those of different Unitarian bodies.

NOTE E. (p. 16.)

Ps. cx. 1; comp. Matt. xxii. 44 (see Allix, p. 324); Hos. i. 7; Joel ii. 32; comp. Rom. x. 13 (see Pearson, 186, 187). Gen. xix. 24, was believed by the ancient Jews, as well as by the early Christian Fathers, to refer to both the Father and the Son, under the title of "Jehovah." See Allix, p. 260; Bull, D. F. N. Sect. I. c. i. n. 16; Sect. IV. c. ii. n. 2; Bishop of Lincoln's Justin, p. 58.

For other instances, see Waterland, First Def. of Qu. III. vol. I.; Wardlaw, pp. 80—85; Dr Gill, ch. vi.

Zech. xiii. 7, makes *Jehovah* say; "The *man* that is my *fellow*." This has commonly been taken for an allusion to the Son of God *incarnate*. Wardlaw so regards it,

¹ That the mind of the Deity is open to such considerations, see 2 Sam. xii. 14. David was pardoned, but care taken (as it is expressly said) to *shew God's displeasure with his act*, by the death of the child.

though not one of his select instances (p. 82). So Mr Wm. Hey, Tract, p. 39. Archbishop Newcome is opposed to this application of the text. See his "Version of the Minor Prophets."

With respect to the name of "*God*," see, as to Isai. ix. 6, Waterland, vol. ii. 131; Allix, pp. 35, 220. Also Bull, D. F. N. Sect. ii. c. vi. n. 3, for the notice of it by Clemens. (The Bishop of Lincoln gives other instances of his application of the title of "*God*" to Christ. See his account of the writings of Clem. p. 332). As to Isai. xxxv. 4, 5, see Allix, 338.

As to Ps. xlv. 6, see Wardlaw, p. 72. Justin refers to this text, among others, to prove that the Messiah is called "*God*" in the Old Testament. Bull, D. F. N. Sect. ii. c. iv. n. 5. Bishop of Lincoln's Justin, p. 24.

We have seen that the apostle applies it to Christ. So also the Jews before his time. See Allix, p. 225.

For "*Lord of Hosts*," see Isai. viii. 13, 14, and comp. Luke ii. 34; Allix, 236—338. For other places, see Bishop of Lincoln's Justin, p. 24.

NOTE F. (p. 17.)

The genuineness of the reading of the Greek text, from which our version is taken, is disputed. Griesbach substitutes *ὁς* for *Θεὸς*—"he" for "*God*." Mr Porson agreed with him. Scholz adheres to *Θεὸς*.

Dr *S. Clarke* says: "It has been a great controversy among learned men, whether *Θεὸς*, *ὁς*, or *ὁ* be the true reading in this place. But it is not, in reality, of great importance. For the sense is evident, that *that person* was "manifest in the flesh," whom St John, in the beginning of his gospel, styles *Θεὸς* "*God*." Scr. Doctr. No. 540. John i. 1, 14.

Bishop *Burgess* says, Sir Isaac Newton preferred to read *ὁ*, Tracts, 208. but as "more comprehensive," and strengthening the doctrine of the Trinity. He follows the Vulgate, which has "quod."

Pearson argues for the received text, p. 163, and note q: see Dr Burton's reference at the end of it. Wardlaw gives the authorities on both sides, but prefers *Θεὸς*. See his note D.

Dr *Whitby* shews the absurdity of the Socinian interpretation of this text, and confirms ours by a reference to other passages. Tract, p. 121.

Bishop *Horsley* compares this text with Matt. i. 23, and quotes what seems a paraphrase of it from Ignatius; "God appearing in the form of a man"—(Θεὸς ἀνθρωπίνως φανερούμενος.) (Tracts, 340.)

See also *Tillotson*, beginning of Sermons I. and IV. on John i. 14. Also Potter, p. 42, who asks, "where the great mystery," if only *a man* was manifest *as such*?

Also *Stillingfleet*, "Discourses on the Trinity," ch. viii. and Sermon on 1 Tim. i. 15; and Waterland, vol. II. 158.

NOTE G. (p. 20.)

p. 61.

Dr *Whitby* in his "Last Thoughts" (one of his *Arian* works, already quoted in note B) reasons as follows, upon our Lord's uniform *reserve*, when charged with "*making himself God*;" admitting fully that the Jews *did so understand* him, and deal with him accordingly.

"It is remarkable, that in all those places, in which the Jews accused him of blasphemy, and "*making himself God*," or, "*equal with God*," or ascribing to *himself* what properly "*belonged to the great God alone*," he *never directly answers*, that *he was God*, or, *equal to him* (although if he were sent to preach that doctrine to the world, it is reasonable to expect, upon these occasions, he *would have done* it), but he ever speaks as one who *waved* that assertion." (p. 62, and again p. 116.)

Surely the fact, thus acknowledged, that he *waved* explanation, should be regarded in the very opposite light.

For supposing him to be charged with "*making himself God*," no possible reason can be assigned, why he should not avow that he was not so, and did not *pretend to be so*, if *such was the fact*. If man only, it would have been at once his duty and wisdom to set them right, and to clear himself of the appearance of *blasphemy*. He would thus have removed a misunderstanding which created a prejudice against him, and

See *Stillingfleet*, iii. 350 and 476.

have set forth the truth¹ to all. (See Allix, 241 ; and Stillingfleet, II. 349, 50.)

But if he was taxed with “making himself God,” and John i. 1. “*was God*,” and intended to be *so understood* ; a good reason is ready, why he should do exactly what is imputed to him by Dr Whitby, and truly imputed ; viz. “wave the assertion” —the *open* assertion—of the truth.

For he knew that this doctrine so conflicted with the religious prejudices of the Jews, that, if distinctly avowed, it would provoke their passions, and induce them to put him to death at once, before he had fully accomplished the main purposes of his ministry ; viz. to preach the Gospel, and to fulfil in himself the prophecies touching the Messiah, to them the chief evidence of his mission. Yet he wished to prepare men’s minds for the belief of his divine nature. His conduct was exactly answerable to this double aim. He continually insinuated the truth of his deity, so as to excite the notice of all, and to convince the teachable : but when charged *hostilely* with this meaning, he avoided such an admission of it, as would have furnished legal evidence of a pretension regarded as blasphemous, and have led to his immediate destruction ; as, *when avowed*, it *did*. His procedure was consistent with the supposition that he “*was God*,” and meant to teach so *gradually*, because to do so abruptly would defeat his object ; but *wholly unaccountable*, if he was *not God*. See first part of Serm. III.

Mr Locke’s view of Christ’s behaviour is totally at variance with that of Dr Whitby. He thinks his reserve natural and wise, on the very grounds we assign ; with reference however to another doctrine, that of his being the *Messiah* only, which Mr L. considers to have been dangerous, if openly promulgated. (He overstates, it is true, both the reserve and the danger, in this case ; but his reasoning upon them is just). See his “Reasonableness of Christianity.”

¹ When accused before Pilate of making himself “Christ, a King,” he *did* Luke xxiii. 2, explain, that “his kingdom was not of this world ;” so as to clear himself of the charge, so far as it was untrue, and offensive to the Romans. John xviii. 36.

NOTE H. (p. 21.)

We meet with the title and character of "Son of God," as applied to Christ, so frequently in the New Testament, with which we are commonly first acquainted, that our minds are familiarized with it, and we are apt to take for granted that it is a customary phrase of Scripture. But when we come to enquire, we find its previous use to have been so rare, as to afford a convincing argument that it is thus pointedly employed of him, to convey some new and surprising truth.

There is not in Scripture a single instance of any *individual*¹ (except Christ) being designated by this exact title, "*Son of God.*"

Job. i. 6.
Gen. vi. 2.
Hos. i. 10.

There are four or five instances, in the Old Testament, of angels, or men, being called *collectively*, "*Sons of God ;*" but in a *metaphorical* sense, not to be misunderstood.

God, it is true, is once or twice represented as, *in his own person*, calling an individual, "My Son:" but it is obviously as an expression of condescension² and favour, not as an intimation of any definite character, or of a *mission from God*. "*Man*"^a of God," "Servant"^b of the Lord," but especially the former, are the titles employed for such an occasion. No one is recorded as presuming to *call himself*, or any other person, *singly*, by the title of "Son of God;" or as so calling God "his Father."

^a Deut.
xxxiii. 1;
1 Sam. ii.
27; et pas-
sim.
^b Deut.
xxxiv. 5.

He who was to come in the character of Messiah, is emphatically proclaimed by God to be "his Son." But in his case, other divine titles are also, in a manner wholly unexampled of any other—of any, save God—appropriated

¹ Dan. iii. 25, is not properly an exception, since it is merely, in the mouth of Nebuchadnezzar, an expression for something in outward appearance above the nature of man.

In the genealogy of Christ, given by St Luke, the title is applied to Adam, merely to mark that, in distinction from those mentioned before, he had no human parent, but was the immediate creature of God's hand.

² In 2 Sam. vii. 14, "My Son," is spoken of Solomon, where the words following, "if he commit iniquity, I will *chasten* him," shew that it is employed merely in the way of *figure*. In Jer. xxxi. 9, 20, it is similarly applied to the tribe of Ephraim.

to him (as we have seen), affording just ground for the inference, that he is called "Son" in a strict and proper (not a metaphorical) sense, to express a *community of nature* with the Father; in which *that* Being had eternally existed, who was to undertake the office of man's redemption. It seems indeed, in one passage, pointedly intimated, that this title had belonged to that sacred person, in a signification which had precluded its application to any created being; "Unto which of the *angels* said he at any time, Heb. i. 5. Thou art *my Son?*"

On this ground only, that it was intended as a mark of his divine nature, can we account for Christ's assumption of this title. For though it had been, in the second Psalm just referred to, addressed to the Messiah, it had not been *familiarized*^c to the Jews, in this sense, so as to make it a ready intimation of him. "Son of David," "Messiah," "that Prophet," were the names which would at once make known a pretension to be "He who should redeem Israel." It was, then, something other than what the Jews were prepared for in their Messiah, which he sought to intimate by this unlooked for character. ^cSee Serm. III. note L. Luke xxiv. 21.

But even if this particular title could be shewn to have been familiar to the Jews, as synonymous with "Messiah" (or Christ), it would not account for his assertion of the relation to God expressed by it, in *other* forms and phrases, as "only-begotten," "my Father," &c. These would not be appropriate and significant of his character, if merely a Son *by office and mission*.

It has already been remarked, that our Lord always makes a marked distinction in the application of the term "Father" to God, accordingly as he refers to *himself*, or to his³ *disciples*. And it is worthy of notice, that *they* preserve the *same distinction*. See p. 20.

³ He speaks to them of God as "*your* Father," but never as "*our*," so as to include himself in the same relation.

A like peculiarity is observable in other allusions. He talks of "*your* father Abraham"—"*your* fathers"—"*your* law." He cautiously avoids any expression which would imply any community with them, or any personal concern in human relations or affairs. Had he been a mere human prophet, this would not have been a natural, or a becoming style. John viii. 56; vi. 49; x. 34.

1 Cor. i. 3.
2 Cor. i. 2.
Phil. i. 2.

They speak of God as *their* Father, but never so as to *include Christ* with themselves.

Rom. xv. 6.
Eph. i. 3.
Col. i. 3.

With respect to him, they say separately ; “The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

2 Cor. i. 2, 3.
Col. i. 2, 3.

Sometimes the two forms follow closely upon each other, and in connection: which proves the distinction not to be accidental, but designed ; and, in the view of the apostles, *necessary*.

Surely the proper inference from all these considerations is, that the character of “Son of God” was assumed as the sign of a true and natural relation, resembling, in some chief particulars, the like relation in man. See Pearson, Art. “His only Son ;” Dr Gill, ch. vii. ; Bull, J. E. C. c. v.

NOTE I. (p. 23.)

Bishop Bull quotes a similar argument of Episcopus, a very celebrated divine of the 17th century ; and himself reasons—that under the *Arian*, or *Socinian* view, God’s love was less wonderful as towards man, than as towards *Christ* ; he being, after either of those schemes, only a *creature*. As such, he would have been richly favoured, in being so “highly exalted above every name,” and “honoured as the Father,” for the mere suffering of death for the good of others ; which the apostles also endured, in the same benevolent work. The mercy displayed in the pardon of man was indeed great in itself. But what enhanced it to this high degree, was, the nearness to the Father himself, of him whom he permitted to humble himself for us to a condition so foreign to his proper nature. Bull, J. E. C. c. v. n. 4 ; Stillingfleet, Sermon on 1 Tim. i. 15, (latter part) ; Waterland, v. 34—36.

NOTE K. (p. 25.)

Doubtless but a very small portion of our Lord’s words are handed down to us. The various illustrations of his doctrines, from day to day, were, as well as the miracles by which he confirmed them to different auditories, more

(as St John informs us) than could be conveniently recorded. John xxi. 25. The first three Evangelists were guided to such compendious selections as best answered the purpose of a general history of his life and lessons, at the time, and for the people for whose instruction they were immediately composed; and St John, to such further choice as the divine wisdom by which they were guided saw needful, in order to perfect the canon of Christian faith. We may be sure that we have in their gospels, taken together, the whole substance of Christ's Revelation, though not all the words in which he, at different times, presented it; having often occasion to repeat the same matter. We are to look at the gospels as *a whole*, in order to get a just impression of the whole truth. And to understand the proper force of any particular passages and expressions, we must take into account the immediate aim of the writer, and the circumstances and opinions of those whom he addressed.

Now the first chapter of St John's Gospel, besides holding up to all ages the doctrine of Christ's pre-existence in the divine nature and his true incarnation, in language peculiarly fitted, as will be shewn^a, to recommend it to ^aSee note L. the unconverted Jews, and even to a great portion of the Gentiles, and to confute the error of some Jewish converts^b ^bThe Ebionites. See Bull, J. E. C. c. ii.; Wilson, ch. xiv. (who, clinging to their old prejudice of the *absolute* unity of God, still questioned the Deity of his Son); is very commonly thought to have respect to two rising heresies of the *Gentile* converts, which early disturbed the peace of the Church.

The religion of the East, at the time of our Saviour's advent, supposed *two* co-ordinate first Principles, two independent Deities, a good, and an evil; the one a Spirit, the other Matter, or Body; and, with these, subordinate Dæmons, to whom was ascribed the creation of all things. Converts from this religion brought with them a tincture of their early superstition, and, in the latter half of the first century, began to corrupt the pure faith of Christianity. Taking from the Gospel the doctrine of our Lord's two-fold nature, the divine and human, they accommodated it to their former mythology. One sect represented Christ and Jesus as distinct beings; Christ a

celestial spirit, and Jesus a *mere man*. They held that Christ, to accomplish the deliverance of man, entered the body of Jesus, at his baptism, but was never personally and inseparably, but only loosely and occasionally united to it, quitting it before the crucifixion. They, it was, among professed Christians, who “denied that Jesus was Christ.” After awhile, Cerinthus, though a Jew by birth, adopted these notions, and the sect then took his name, and were called *Cerinthians*.

The Docetæ, holding otherwise much the same tenets, differed in this, that they denied altogether the *reality* of the man Jesus, and held that the divine spirit, Christ, never, even for a moment, united his nature to that of man; never at all resided in a *proper human body*. They considered *Jesus* to have been but the shadowy and phantastical *appearance* of a man, without the substance; assumed by Christ, in order to make himself cognizable to human sense. They, it was, who “confessed not that Jesus Christ had come *in the flesh*.” Of course these denied the truth of the crucifixion.

These heresies are thought by many writers of good authority, on the strength of very ancient testimony, to have already sprung up when St John wrote his gospel (as to his *Epistles*, there is no doubt), and to have given occasion to some of the expressions in the first chapter.

It is to be borne in mind, that these absurdities, though entertained by some who had assumed the profession of Christianity, were not *derived* from it, but were dreams of Paganism grafted upon it. They who held them were obliged to reject a great portion of Scripture, because absolutely irreconcilable with them.

It should also be observed, that, absurd as these notions are, they bear witness to the truth. They shew that the doctrine of a double nature in Christ, the human and the divine, was generally acknowledged. For it was out of this received doctrine, that these heretics formed the link between Christianity and their old superstition.

See Mosheim, Cent. i. Part ii. ch. v.; Waterland, vol. v. ch. vi. (where he gives the particular expressions in this chapter which are thought to regard these heresies); Bull, D. F. N. sect. iii. c. i. n. 6 and 8; J. E. C. c. ii.; Berriman,

Serm. i.; Tillotson, Serm. i. on John i. 14; Whitby's Tract, p. 46; Horsley's fourth letter to Priestly.

See also Lardner's Works, vol. II. 87, 161; IX. 319—330, VI. 189, and 210—217. He doubts whether Cerinthus had adopted this heresy before St John wrote his *gospel*, though in vol. XI. 87 he expresses himself differently. But Hey (Lect. B. I. Appendix, sect. 25) obviates this objection, by the reasonable suggestion, that these erroneous tenets were afloat, and known to the evangelist (who lived in the country where they sprung up) before they had become notorious enough to acquire a name.

In confirmation of this suggestion of Hey, it may be stated, that, according to Bull, the opinions of Apollinaris and Eutyches also were broached long before the time when these persons adopted, and gave them celebrity. D. F. N. sect. II. c. 8. n. 4.

NOTE L. (p. 26.)

The Apocryphal books preserved so carefully by the Jews, though not available to establish any new doctrine, as wanting the sanction of divine inspiration, are yet of authority as a record of the ancient interpretation of Scripture, at the different periods at which they were written. The Targums, or Chaldee Paraphrases, composed for the instruction of the common people who had lost the use of their own language during the captivity, serve to a like end. And besides these, there was, at the time of our Lord's Advent, a further knowledge of ancient opinions preserved and handed down *orally*; some traces of which are to be found in the writings of Philo, an eminent Jew of that day. The information to be derived from these sources on the doctrine here treated of, was not, any more than the language of Scripture itself upon it, clear or definite; and therefore was always confined to a few of the more learned or zealous students of the mysteries of the divine Word. The *Scribes* were chiefly occupied with minute and fanciful traditions on minor topics—the “mint and cummin” of holy writ,—and were igno-

Matt. xv. 14 ;
xxii. 41—45 ;
xxiii. 13, 16,
17, 24, 28. rant upon matters deeper and more important. This appears from our Saviour's frequent reproaches of them.

Learned moderns, and among these especially Dr Allix, have examined these sources of information, with a view to ascertain how the ancient Jews (before our Saviour's appearance on earth) interpreted the passages of the Old Testament which have been referred to, and others, bearing upon the doctrine of the Trinity. The result of Dr Allix's researches is given in his work, entitled, "The Judgment of the Ancient Jewish Church against the Unitarians." And although he has perhaps on some points overstated the conclusions which his authorities warrant, he has succeeded in shewing reason to believe, that there were always among the earlier Jews, those who derived from their Scriptures some notion of a plurality in the one divine nature, and of a plurality restricted to *three*; that the second of these divine Beings was known to them under the title of the "Logos," or "Word" of God; and the third, by that of "the Spirit" of God.

It seems, moreover, that they had an expectation, that the "Logos," or "Word," was to come upon earth as the promised Messiah; and that they applied to him the passages which have been referred to, in which that personage is spoken of by the divine titles; that they regarded both the "Word" and the "Spirit" of God as having taken part in the creation of the world; and the former as being intended, when God is said to have appeared to, or conversed with man—as Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, &c. it being to the Father that those texts more strictly apply, which assert, that "no man hath seen God at any time:" and moreover, that it was the "Logos" or "Word" who led the children of Israel in the wilderness.

See pp. 14—
17.

Exod. xxxiii.
20 ; comp.
Judg. xiii.
22.

Dr Allix contends that our Saviour and his apostles often alluded to such meaning of the old Scriptures, and to ancient opinions grounded on them, as supplying effectual arguments with such of the Jews as had the knowledge of them, or might inform themselves through others. Thus John i. 18, v. 37, 39, vi. 46, contain assertions, the truth of which the Jews would acknowledge; and from which they must needs gather, that another person than the Father is

spoken of as God, in the Old Testament ; and so be led to search it, and the ancient interpretations of it, for a solution. There is a like example in Matth. xxii. 42—45. They would learn by a diligent enquiry of those few who were conversant with such knowledge, that their fathers had entertained some notion that the “Logos” or “Word” (a divine *title* familiar to *all*) was a real person, and that he is intended in Ps. ii., where God speaks of one as his “Son ;” and also that it was the “Word” who was to come as their promised Messiah.

The opinions grounded on the language of the Old Testament had always been more or less vague and uncertain, as the language itself was obscure, and not intended for a *perfect* revelation. Hence the knowledge of those opinions was doubtless at all times confined to the more learned. At the time of our Lord’s appearance, there seems reason to believe, it was limited to a very few ; and the ancient opinions which were to them known, were not confidently entertained by them. The mass of the people, and even of the Scribes and Pharisees, were altogether ignorant of such notions. Still the means of knowledge were accessible. And it was no doubt in part owing to enquiries after it, suggested by the appeals of Christ to the Scriptures, that “of the chief rulers many came to believe on him ;” John xii. 42. finding his pretensions correspond with the true, though hitherto little understood tenor of the word of God. And from time to time many more would be led to follow their example, and search if “these things were so.” Thus, after awhile, the apostles could appeal both to the hidden doctrines of the divine word, and to the former interpretations of them, more confidently, and without explanation, as relating to points now ascertained. Hence St Paul alludes, without remark, as to a now current truth, to the fact of its having been the divine Spirit in Christ who conducted their fathers from Egypt to the land of Canaan ; though the Pharisees so little comprehended our Saviour’s hint at the same truth. 1 Cor. x. 4, 9. See Bull, J. E. C. c. v. n. 8. With the earlier of the evangelists, miracles, and notorious prophecies fulfilled, were the readier proofs of the doctrine which necessarily formed the *first* topic of their instruction—viz. the divine *mission* of Jesus, as the Messiah. But St

John viii. 5, 58.

John, writing later, could more effectually refer to the now better-known sense of those passages of the Old Testament, which intimated his divine *nature*. And he accordingly combats the prejudices of the Jews against this doctrine, by shewing them, that there was in it an agreement with the lessons of their Scriptures, as interpreted by their forefathers, so that it could contain no real infringement of the divine unity, as formerly taught and received. Having thus shewn the consistency of this doctrine with the prior revelation of God, he then proceeds, as an authorised and inspired historian of the *new*, to affirm the truth of it by abundant and harmonious testimony from *Christ's own lips*, in the discourses which assert his pre-existence in the "glory of the Father," and by other witness to his true deity.

See Allix's Book; Bull, D. F. N. sect. i. c. i. n. 16—20; Pearson, p. 152, and note e; Dr Gill, ch. v.; Stillingfleet, vol. III. 494; Bishop Burgess's Tracts, pp. 72 and 158—171; Tillotson, Sermon on 1 Tim. ii. 5, § iv.; and Sermon. i. on John i. 14; Whitby's Tract, c. i. sect. 12; Potter, p. 78, &c.; Hey, Lect. B. iv. Art. ii. sect. 1; Wolff's third Journal, p. 46; and Ridley's second Moyer's Lect. (for the Holy Spirit).

The early Fathers of the Church were fully acquainted with, and persuaded of the doctrine, that it was the Divine Spirit in Christ who was intended in all the recorded appearances and communications of God with man, in the Old Testament; and that it was he who called himself the "*God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*," &c. See Bull, D. F. N. sect. i. c. i.; sect. iv. c. iii. n. 4, 5; Waterland, first Def. of Qu. XVIII.; Bishop of Lincoln's Justin, pp. 31, 47, 55; Wilson, p. 353; Clarke's Script. Doctr. No. 597, 616.

Bull says the Arians did not dispute this doctrine. D. F. N. sect. i. c. i. n. 1. Lardner quotes an Arian Creed which anathematizes those who deny it. vol. IV. 116. (Credib. of Gosp. Hist. Part II. ch. lxix.) One of the anathemas is directed against those who understand the words in Gen. xix. 24, "The Lord rained fire from the Lord," not of the Father and the Son, but of the Father only.

NOTE M. (p. 28.)

This assertion pretty much corresponds with one of Eusebius, quoted by Whitby, to the effect that St John is here referring to the old Scriptures, and to the religious tenets of the ancient Jews grounded upon them. Having shewn that such had been their notions, as we have represented them, he proceeds; ἔνθεν καὶ ἡ εὐαγγελικὴ διδασκαλία τὸ προφητικὸν καὶ πατριον ἀναγενομένη δόγμα, ταύτῃ πῇ διασαφεῖ τὴν θεολογίαν ἐν ἀρχῇ ἣν ὁ λόγος. κ. τ. λ. “Unde et evangelica doctrina prophetica illam *instaurans patriamque* sententiam, idem *Theologiæ* genus hunc in modum illustrat: *In principio erat Verbum, &c.*” Whitby confirms this assertion of Eusebius, by a comparison of the expressions of St John with others in the Apocryphal Books, in the Chaldee Paraphrases, and in Philo. And he then concludes; “Quis hanc harmoniam, hanc sensus et verborum *συμπνοίην* conspiciens, non existimet Johannem cum Judæis suis colloquutum esse juxta *eorum placita*, et juxta *conceptus qui inter eos obtinuerant?*”

With the writers of that age, Θεολογία refers to the *original, divine* nature of Christ, in distinction from his nature κατ' οἰκονομίαν, i.e. his nature under the Gospel dispensation—his nature when incarnate. See Bull, J. E. C. c. v. n. 9; Berriman, 51—55.

It must however be admitted, that Eusebius, not having been familiar with the Hebrew language, cannot be regarded as an *independent* authority as to the opinions of the ancient Jews.

NOTE N. (p. 30.)

Dr Cudworth, whose learning and judgment are much prized by Mr Locke, is of opinion, that the old Platonists and other Greek philosophers obtained some glimpses of the doctrine of a Trinity from *the Jews*, which they mixed up with speculations of their own; and that such a circulation of this doctrine was *expressly contrived by the Deity*, to *facilitate the subsequent reception of the truth*. Having

shewn that they obtained their notions from the Jews, he proceeds :—

Vol. III. 193;
also, 35—6;
and II. 390, 1.

“Wherefore, we cannot but take notice here of a wonderful providence of Almighty God, that this doctrine of a trinity of divine hypostases (persons) should find such admittance and entertainment in the pagan world, and be received by the wisest of all their philosophers, before the time of Christianity; thereby to *prepare a more easy way for the reception of Christianity among the learned pagans*; which that it *proved successful accordingly*, is *undeniably evident* from the monuments of antiquity.”

Serm. I. on
John i. 14;
and on
1 Tim. ii. 5.

Tillotson is of the same opinion, as to the heathens having derived their notions of a Trinity from the Jews. See also Bull, D. F. N. sect. I. c. i. n. 18; Pr. et Ap. Tr. c. iv. v.; Wilson, end of ch. xxii., and beg. of ch. xxiii.; Allix, c. xxiii.; Stillingfleet, Disc. on the Trinity, ch. ix., for the opinion of Clemens Alex. and Origen; Berriman, Sermon II, (latter part); Ridley's second Moyer's Lect.; and Dr Gill, ch. v.

Lect. B. IV.
Art. i. Sect.
3.

Hey remarks justly, on this point; “Judaism was a *national* religion, Plato's only what may be called a *personal* one: it is more likely that a private man should hear of and adopt the religion of a nation, than that a nation should hear of and adopt the tenets of an individual;” especially a nation so jealous as the Jews, touching their God.

Plato's doctrine and phraseology were sometimes so similar to those of the Jewish Scriptures, that his own followers described him as “*Moses speaking Greek*;” implying that he derived his knowledge, and even his terms, from this source. (Berriman, 99.)

Vol. VI. 215.

Dr Lardner asserts that St John did not borrow the title of “*the Word*” from Plato, but that it was strictly of Jewish origin, and *most* familiar to such as were “most zealous for the law, and exempt from foreign and philosophical speculations.” But, as an Unitarian, he does not allow that any of them attached to it the notion of a person.

NOTE O. (p. 31.)

It cannot be denied that the meaning we assign to the words of St John, is the simple, natural, and direct meaning. It is their plain and obvious purport, that he who, it is afterwards said, was "made flesh and dwelt among us," "was God;" *i.e.* was of *the same nature with that Being*, with whom he "was in the beginning."

We can only extract other meaning from the phrase, "was God," by supposing the word "God" to be used in it to represent a notion different from that for which it stands *immediately* before; *i.e.* in some *lower*, or some *metaphorical* sense. And we must borrow either construction of it from our own fancy: the context supplies no hint of any such. Nay, quite the contrary: it confirms the identity of purport of the term "God" in the two sentences, by forthwith ascribing to the "Word," to whom it is applied in the second instance, the peculiar properties and operations of that Being who is designated by it in the first; such as, "Life" and "Light," and the creation of "all things."

See Ward-law, note G; Gill, ch. v.

There is, in fact, but one strict and proper signification of the word "God," recognized in any part of Scripture. It is used of *idols*, in the way of reproach to those who regarded them as gods; and *figuratively*, of *creatures*, in a way that cannot be misunderstood; as when it is said of Moses, that he "was made a *god* to Pharaoh," as being the instrument for displaying to him the power of the true God. But it is nowhere employed in a *proper* sense, other than one; nowhere to intimate a *real* nature, other than that of the "High and Lofty One that inhabiteth eternity." The consistent voice of all revelation is; "Who is God, save the Lord?"

See Waterl. Def. of Qu. iii. 2 Kings xix. 18; Ps. cxxxv. 5, 15—20; cxxxii. 6.

Exod. vii. 1.

Isai. lxiii. 15.

Ps. xviii. 31.

When, then, the evangelist, in a plain¹ narrative, written under the divine control, as an authoritative exposition, to all ages, of that truth which is to "make wise unto salvation,"

2 Tim. iii. 15.

¹ Bishop Burnet says of St John, that "of all the writers of the New Testament, he has the greatest plainness and simplicity of style." (Art. II.)

2Tim. iii. 15. proclaims, as the foundation of Christian faith, "The Word was God;" what are we to understand? that he "*was* God," or that he *was not* God?

In the very next verse, and also in one shortly following, the term is found in its primary and plenary signification. It occurs eleven times in this one chapter alone, and everywhere in the same uniform purport. Nowhere in this Gospel—nowhere in the whole New Testament—is it used in any other. The Jews acknowledged no other—could understand it in no other. Is it reasonable to suppose, that without explanation, without any hint of transition to another meaning, St John would at once, and *for once* only, employ it in a new and strange signification? Would not this have been certainly, and as if of set purpose, to mislead? And it should be added, that, writing, as is generally thought, with a view to erroneous doctrines already prevailing on this very point, he would take especial care to be plain and accurate in his language.

See Whitby's Tract, p. 46.

Burnet, Art. II. pp. 51, 52.

With any other meaning in view, why should he so express himself? Did language supply no other mode of making known that "the Word" was *not* God, than by saying that he "*was* God?" What truth respecting him, other than that he was *true and perfect God*, could *require* to be thus expressed? What other truth *could* be so expressed, to the probable instruction of those who should read the words? What other could be so expressed in this, rather than in any other way? Surely, if the evangelist had not intended to teach that "the Word was God," in truth and perfectness, he would have avoided any approach to language so liable to give occasion to pestilent error.

If we reject the *plain* meaning of these words, we must seek one by conjecture. There is no apparent indication of any other. Accordingly, they who refuse to allow the direct sense, being unfettered by the context, fly off into various and conflicting interpretations, each after their own fancy.

See Waterland, vol. II. Sermon I; and vol. V. ch. vi. viii.

The *Sabellians*¹ (and others before them who came to

¹ For an account of the Sabellians (and of the Praxeans and Noctians here included with them), see Mosheim, Cent. II. ch. v. sect. 20. and Cent. III. ch. v. sect.

be included under this name, but with some minor diversities of opinion) rightly interpreted the term "*God*." They clearly saw it to be the intention of the evangelist, to ascribe by it to "the Word" the perfect nature and entire majesty of the Supreme Being. But, unable to reconcile this doctrine with that of the *unity* of God, they sought to escape from this perplexity, by supposing "*the Word*" to be that very Being, *with whom* he is said to have been; that "the Word" was the *Father himself*, by another name. They made a like inference with regard to the Holy Ghost. They acknowledged him to be represented as being truly God. But they held that but *one person* of God is intended throughout; that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are but different *titles* assigned to him, according to his immediate operation; that he is called the *Father*, when spoken of as in heaven; the *Son*, when united to the human nature in Christ; and the *Holy Ghost*, when descending upon the apostles, and other disciples.

Hence, when it is said, "The Word was made flesh," John i. 14. it followed, as a proper consequence from this tenet, that the Father (the one only person of God acknowledged) was incarnate, was united to the nature of man in the womb of the Virgin, was born and *crucified*. Accordingly this sect received, in reproach, the name of *Patri-passians*.

One of the earlier broachers of this heresy is said to have confessed to this whole consequence, and thus to have justified it: "There is but one God, viz. the Father. Christ is undoubtedly God. Therefore he is the Father. Hence, whatever Christ did or suffered, the Father did or suffered." Noetus. See Lardner, III. 8—10.

Others who held the doctrine sought to evade this consequence in part, by supposing that the divine nature was united to the human in Jesus, only after his birth, and separated from it before the crucifixion: Waterl. v. 231.

Others, again, by supposing "the Word, who was made

sect. 12, 13; Pearson, vol. II. 119, 121; Wall's Hist. of Inf. Baptism, vol. II. 125; Cudworth, III. 152; Lardner, vol. III. pp. 7—17 and 78; (Credib. of Gosp. Hist. Part II. ch. xli); Berriman, Sermon III; Stillingfleet, "Disc. on the Trin." Pref. and ch. vii; Waterland, III. 410. and v. 231.

flesh," not to be the *entire* nature of the Father, but only a *portion* of it, or an *attribute*¹.

Mosheim,
Cent. III. ch.
v. sect. 13.

John i. 2.

Tillotson,
Serm. I. on
John i. 14.

The Sabellians, in their anxiety to maintain the divine unity, while giving its true weight to one portion of St John's words, overlooked the purport of the other, and the clear testimony given by it to the general language of the New Testament, which makes the Son *distinct from* the Father. "The Word" is said to have been "*with* God;" a communion which necessarily requires two subjects. And the expression is straightway repeated; "The same was in the beginning with God;" to mark the truth the more pointedly, it is thought, and prevent the misconception, that because "the Word" is truly "God" as the Father is, he is also the same *person*. Moreover, the Son is said to be "sent" by the Father, and to "come forth" *from* him: the Father addresses the Son, and the Son the Father: the Father "glorifies" the Son, and the Son the Father. There is scarcely any mode of speech by which a distinction of persons is made known, which is not employed of them: so that this heresy is in manifest contradiction to the Gospel².

See Gill, ch.
viii.

The *Arians*³ equally misinterpreted the language of St

¹ These nearly resembled the Unitarians of that day, who held Jesus to be a mere man, but thus divinely inhabited. See Mosheim, Cent. II. ch. v. sect. 21; and Waterland, v. 230.

This was also the view of Dr Lardner, and some modern Unitarians, as will be presently stated.

² The heresy most directly opposed to the *Sabellians*, was that of the "*Tritheists*." But as they construed the language of St John as we do, they do not properly come under our present consideration. They held "the Word" to be truly "God," and to be a distinct *person* from the Father. But they ran into the error of making him distinct in *substance* as well as in *person*, so as to be wholly separate in nature, without any real union. They held the same of the Holy Ghost; and thus made *three Gods*, against the manifest sense of Scripture. Wall, Hist. of Inf. Bapt. II. 128; Bingham, Orig. Eccl. B. x. ch. iii; XIII. ch. ii; Stillingfleet, Preface to Disc. on the Trin.; and Berriman, pp. 136, 7, and 317, 8. Mr Gibbon gives a succinct statement of the doctrines of these two sects, and of the Arians, in his "Decline and Fall," ch. xxi. There was also another sect called *Triformians*, who supposed the divine substance to be *divided* amongst the three persons of the Trinity, so that they are *three parts of one whole*. Bingham's Orig. Eccl. B. XIII. ch. ii.

³ For the doctrines of Arius and his followers, who were much divided in opinion, see Mosheim, Cent. IV. ch. v; Lardner, Credib. of Gospel History, Part II. ch. lxix; Bull, D. F. N.; Berriman, Serm. IV; Waterland's first Def. of Qu. xv. and vol. v. ch. vi.

John, but *differently*. They acknowledged that he clearly intimates the distinct personality of the Father and "the Word" (or "Son of God"); and also that he characterizes the latter as "God." But they thought to preserve the doctrine of the unity of the Godhead, by supposing the term "God" to be employed of "the Word," in a different sense from that in which it belongs to the Father. They held that in the "Word," it implies a nature different from, and inferior to that of the Father; super-angelic indeed, but created out of nothing, as other creatures; and so, like them, destructible⁴.

Scripture (as has already been remarked) supplies *no example* of such a signification of the word "God." In fact, such a doctrine, while conceding the title, takes away the nature. Or, supposing it true, Christ would be *altogether a separate* God from the Father, and there would be more Gods than one. Moreover, the worship of *a creature*⁵ would be revived, which it was one object of the Gospel revelation to abolish.

See specimens of their creeds (and of their dishonesty) in Wall's Hist. of Inf. Bapt. vol. II. 349—355.

For the *modern* Arians, see Waterland, Index to vol. I. and to vol. III; and for their mode of interpreting the first chapter of St John's Gospel, and the first chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, vol. V. c. viii; also, Tillotson, Sermon I. on John I. 14.

⁴ See Cudworth, III. 155; Bull, D. F. N. sect. II. c. i. n. 3, 4; Berriman, Sermon IV. There were anciently some who held "the Son" to be of a different substance from the Father, created, but not (*ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων*) "out of nothing." They were called Semi-Arians. Bull, D. F. N. sect. II. c. ix. n. 11; sect. IV. c. iv. n. 8; and Waterl. Def. of Qu. XIII. It is justly argued against them, that between God and creature there can be no middle nature. Dr S. Clarke avows this Semi-Arian notion (Scr. Doctr. Part II. § xiv). It is however related of him, that he consented, at the request of Queen Caroline (wife of George Ist), to discuss his views with a learned Trinitarian, in her presence. The latter also acquiesced, and at the close of Dr Clarke's exposition, desired a categorical answer to one question—a simple affirmative, or negative. Clarke assented. The question was, whether the Father can *annihilate the Son and the Holy Ghost*. He declined to give an answer. An affirmative would have declared them creatures; a negative, God. (See Van Mildert's Life of Dr Waterland, p. 102, note.)

⁵ The ancient Christians made this objection to the Arians, that they *paganized* Christianity, by restoring *creature-worship*. See Cudworth, III. 199—206.

See this argument in Whitby's Tract, pp. 53—58; Potter, pp. 65—69; Waterland's first and second Def. of Qu. XVI.

The *Socinians*¹ allowed that “the Word” is represented as a *person*, and other than the Father, and that he is called “God,” and that *Christ* is intended by this name. But they put a *figurative* construction upon the whole passage. They believed Christ to have been a *mere man*, born of a virgin by the special intervention of God, guided by his Spirit, and endowed with his authority while on earth; and now to exercise in heaven the whole dominion and sovereignty of God over the world, and to be ordained the Judge of all; and that on these grounds only he is called by St John “God”; that it is merely a title of *office*, and not belonging to him by any superiority of *nature* to man. They regarded him as a proper object of worship and prayer, which they considered to have been addressed to him by his disciples, even on earth. They required his name to be mentioned with the same reverence as that of the Father, and considered every word spoken by him, or by his apostles, as of divine authority. And they held none for Christians who refuse the worship of him.

Luke xvii. 5.
Matt. viii.
25.

They denied his pre-existence. They understood the assertion of St John, that “the Word was in the beginning with God,” to mean, that Christ, *before he commenced his ministry*, was *taken up bodily to Heaven*, to the presence of God, to receive his instructions. In this way they explained the many allusions to his “coming down from Heaven.” And they interpreted his creation of “all things,” of the *moral renovation* of man, by his pure precepts.

John i. 3.

This doctrine, like that of the Arians, is opposed to the whole tenor of the Scriptures, which forbid to worship any being, save him who is *truly God*. It teaches to “serve the creature besides the Creator”—the very sin of the Gentiles. “To avoid (says Tillotson) the shadow and

See note C,
and Sermon
II. note G.
Rom. i. 25.
Sermon, II. on
John i. 14.

¹ For the opinions of Socinus and his followers, see Toulmin’s “Life of Socinus,” ch. iii. sect. II; and, especially as to his interpretation of this chapter, Appendix I; Racovian Catechism (or Rees’s Translation) sect. IV; sect. V. ch. I; and sect. VI. and VII; Mosheim, Cent. XVI. sect. III. Part II. ch. IV; Stillingfleet, “Disc. on the Trin.” ch. viii; Tillotson, Sermons on John i. 14; Whitby’s Tract; Berriman, Sermon. VIII; Gill, ch. vii.

Dr S. Clarke condemns the Socinian interpretation of St John’s language “as forced and unnatural.” Ser. Doctr. No. 535.

appearance of a plurality of Deities, they really run into it, and for any thing that I can see, into downright idolatry.” Serm. on
1 Tim. i. 15.
Bishop Stillingfleet justly remarks, that “it is more reasonable to suppose such a condescension in the ‘Son of God’ to ‘take upon him the form of a servant,’ for our advantage, than that a *mere man* should be exalted to the honour and worship which belong to God.”

Of the *Unitarians* (who, like the *Arians*, were much divided in opinion) some, as Paul of Samosata, and Photinus, of the ancients (and Dr Lardner of the moderns) interpreted St John’s meaning, *in part*, after the Sabellian views. Unlike the *Socinians*, they admitted that by the phrase “in the beginning,” is intended, *from everlasting*; and that the word “God,” in the phrase “*was God*,” is employed in the same full sense, as in the previous part of the verse; and that the *creation*², ascribed to “the Word,” is that of the *world*. But by “the Word,” they understood not a *person*, distinct from the Father, but a mere³ *attribute* of the Father—*his reason*.

They held *Christ* to have been a mere man, born miraculously of a virgin, largely inspired by God’s Spirit, com-

² For Paul, see Bull, J. E. C. c. iii. n. 5; for Photinus, Wall, II. 353; Lardner, vol. IV. 361—368; Pearson, p. 154, and note f; for both, Mosheim, Cent. III. ch. v. sect. 15, and Cent. IV. ch. v. sect. 19; Stillingfleet’s “Disc. on the Trin.” ch. iv; Berriman, Serm. III. and V.

For Dr Lardner’s opinions, see his “History of St John,” (VI. 215); “Letter on the Logos,” (XI. 94—97); his Sermon on John XX. 17, (X. 334); and the third of his “Posthumous Discourses on the Trinity,” (X. 618). For some Unitarian schemes, subsequent to that of Socinus, see Berriman, Serm. VIII.

³ Dr S. Clarke thus remarks upon this interpretation of “*The Word*,” “It is with great violence to the text, and to the whole scope of the Gospel, that the *Sabellian*, and some *Socinian* writers (whose notions, though seemingly most contrary, yet in reality amount, in the end, to the same thing) expound this passage of the *Internal Reason*, or *Wisdom* of God. *In the beginning was Reason*, and *Reason was with God*, &c. As if the person who came to be incarnate for us, and to die for our sins, was nothing but an *attribute* of the Father, without any real being.” (Script. Doctr. No. 535.)

On the other hand, Dr Lardner treats the *Arian* interpretations of Dr Clarke with little respect, saying they are “generally false.” (“Letter on the Logos,” Works, vol. XI. 112.)

So little harmony is there among those who dissent from the natural, obvious meaning of St John’s language. See also Waterland, vol. I. 252—255; vol. IV. third and fourth Letters to Mr Staunton; and V. 231—233.

missioned by him and empowered to work miracles, while on earth; and on these grounds alone, and not on account of any superiority of *nature*, called the "Son of God."

But what probability is there, that St John would, in
 John i. 1, 2. a plain history of Christ, take pains to inform us that "Reason was in the beginning with God, and was God"? that
 John i. 8. the Baptist "was not" the reason of God, but "was sent to bear witness" of it? What propriety in the assertion,
 John i. 14. that "Reason was made flesh"—took to itself the whole
 Rev. xix. 13. nature of man? How is Christ, in *this* sense, called "the Word," *since his ascension*? Is this figurative sense of the term consistent with the style of the rest of St John's Gospel? Does it form a natural introduction to it?

Others of the *Unitarians*¹ (and with these the moderns chiefly concur) rejected everything supernatural concerning Christ, both as to his birth and his powers, whether on earth or in heaven. They regarded him as a mere man, instructed of God to declare his counsels. And this is what they understood by his being "God," and "with God." They held him excellent, morally, but not otherwise differing from mankind in general. But then they were driven to reject the Gospel of St John altogether, and not only that of St John, but those of St Mark and St Luke, and the beginning of that of St Matthew.

All, save the last, bear testimony to the truth. The preponderating conviction in their mind was that of the "unity of God." They had no prepossession in favour of *Christ's divinity*; on the contrary, it was the stumbling-

¹ For the ancient Unitarians, and their method of dealing with Scripture, see Bull, J. E. C. c. vii. n. 9; Wilson, c. xiv; Berriman, p. 82—84.

For the moderns, see the various important points in which they dissent from the Socinians, in Rees's notes to his translation of the Racovian Catechism, especially sect. iv. and sect. v. ch. i. Dr Rees also expressly disclaims for himself, and Unitarians generally, the doctrine of Dr Lardner, as to the miraculous conception of Christ. See note, p. 53; and the authorities to whom he refers.

Channing seems to take rather higher views. See "Disc. on the Dedic. of the Second Congregational Unitarian Church," and his "Objections to Unitarian Christianity considered." Works, vol. i. 391 and 571.

For their method of dealing with Scripture, see notes B and C, Sermon iv, and the references there made; and for some of their interpretations, Bishop Burgess, Tracts, 86—88.

block in their way. They saw it, however, in Scripture, in its *direct, obvious sense*. They dared not to neglect it, for they acknowledged "all Scripture to be given by inspiration of God." They sought, therefore, to reconcile its language with the unity of God, by warping it to an agreement with that doctrine, each after the manner that best suited their fancy. The nature of Christ was the grand subject of heresy. It was the mode in which Christ is to be regarded as "God," that formed the distinctive character of the Sabellian, the Arian, and the Socinian schemes. That doctrine, which each sought to shape to their particular views, must have been regarded by all as prominent in Scripture; and, since it formed the ground of their dissent from the great mass of Christians, must have been *generally received*. The objections² urged against the prevailing creed by those who, on different grounds, dissented from it, and the arguments by which the Fathers of the Church rebuked their errors, clearly prove what the established creed really was.

Even the *Unitarians* bear testimony to the existence of our doctrine in the Scriptures, by the necessity which they have felt of rejecting a great portion of Scripture, or of tampering with it, or denying its inspiration.

From these conflicting interpretations we must select

² Mr Wall remarks; "People's meaning about a doctrine is never better perceived, than by observing, in some dispute about it, how and with what reasons one side attacks, and how the other answers." And he then proceeds to apply this remark to different heresies, and so to establish that the doctrine of the early Church was that which we hold. See his argument, "Hist. of Inf. Bapt." vol. II. 124, &c.

The *Sabellians* professed not to dissent from the Church in making but *one* person in the Godhead. The Church, then, must have held an *unity* in the Godhead, in *some* sense.

The *Arian* professed not to dissent from the Church, in regarding three entirely distinct beings, as each God (though unequal in nature).

The Church, then, must have also held a *Trinity* in the Godhead, in *some* sense. Here then we have, confessedly, a Trinity and an Unity, as the doctrine of the Church.

Again: the *Sabellians* called the orthodox, *Tritheists*: they understood them, then, to hold a *Trinity*, in *some* sort.

The *Arians* reproached the orthodox, as *Sabellians*: they understood them, then, to hold an *unity*, in *some* sense. The same conclusion follows, as before.

* See latter
part of
Serm. III.

one, if we will not receive St John's language in its plain, natural purport, supported by a vast variety of concurrent testimony throughout Scripture; and by the consentient faith of the great body^a of the Christian Church, from the time of the apostles to the present day.

Moreover, between these different sects, the whole of St John's language is allowed to bear the sense which we ascribe to it. The *Sabellians* own "the Word" to be described by him as *truly God*; the *Arians*, that "the Word" is a *person* distinct from the *Father*; *both*, that the creation of the *world* is represented as his work; and that he was incarnate in Jesus Christ. The *Socinians* admit that the whole *power* and *authority* of God are ascribed to him; that *prayer* and *worship* are to be directed to him, and that he is held up as the future Judge of man. Thus every article of the doctrine which we ground on this language of St John is conceded as the true purport of it. Each of these sects rejects a portion of our interpretation; but between them *the whole is acknowledged*.

It is no light testimony to the meaning of St John, that the bitter and learned enemy of Christianity, the Emperor Julian (in the 4th century) found no other way of evading its authority for the divinity of Christ, than by gratuitously supposing that, owing to the already general belief of this doctrine among Christians before St John wrote, he, *to curry favour with them*, inserted in his gospel this language declaratory of it. See Waterland, vol. v. 179—180; Berriman, p. 38.

NOTE P. (p. 36.)

See note K, for the doctrine of the Cerinthians and the Docetæ. Whether or no St Paul had these doctrines here in view, or whether or no St John had in his *gospel*, it is confessed on all hands, that the *first and second epistles* of the latter are directed against them. And it is necessary to bear this in mind, in order to get at the true meaning of much of his language in them.

Locke, vi.
152, 254.

It is to be remembered, that *all* the epistles of the New Testament were written to *believers*—to persons already per-

suaded of the *fundamental* truths of the Gospel. There is no question in them of *formally* teaching first principles, such as, that *Jesus is the Messiah*, &c.; but the aim of them is to “enlarge these by new illustrations, or to rebuke errors”—“to resolve doubts, and reform mistakes.” The persons addressed by St John, are, his “little children”—his disciples, such as “believe in the name of the Son of God.” The persons *condemned* are not *unbelievers*, such as *deny Jesus to be the Messiah*; but *erroneous teachers*, who had “gone out from them”—who had been disciples, but would not “continue” in the “truth as it is in Jesus”—but set up other doctrines than they had been taught. Such were the *Cerinthians*, who held Jesus and Christ to be distinct beings, not united indissolubly in one person; but that the Divine Christ only resided *occasionally* in the man *Jesus*^a, just as the Holy Spirit in the prophets. Such, again, were the Docetæ, who did not believe in the reality of *Jesus* at all; but that what seemed a man was only an *apparition*, of which the Divine Christ availed himself, to bring his presence under the notice of man’s vision.

When, then, St John proclaims, “Whosoever believeth that *Jesus is the Christ*, is born of God;” or, on the other hand; “Who is a liar but he that denieth that *Jesus is the Christ?*” he is holding up, not the comparative merit of *believers* and *unbelievers* in Jesus as the *Messiah*; but of a *true* and an *erroneous* faith touching his *nature*. He is setting up the truth against those who *separate Jesus* from *Christ*, and make them two natures not perfectly united, and proclaiming Jesus Christ as *one Person*, viz. *God incarnate*. So when he says, “Whosoever shall confess, that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him;” the praise is of those who own the human and divine natures to have been indissolubly united in one being; who acknowledge *Jesus* and *Christ* to be *one person*.

The same language, addressed to *unbelievers*, has a very different purport. To such, it simply announces *Jesus* for the *Messiah*; the son of Mary for the promised Saviour. And this distinction must be carefully observed. It is one of the most striking examples, to shew that “if we would understand the New Testament aright, we must fix in our

Locke.

¹ John ii. 1; iii. 18; v. 13.

¹ John ii. 19.

^a See note K.

¹ John v. 1.

¹ John iv. 15.

Acts xvii. 3.

Stillfleet,
iii. 659.

minds a true scheme of the state of the controversies of that time ;” that a knowledge of the opinions and circumstances to which the sacred writers address themselves, is essential to a right apprehension of their meaning ; for that these make a part of their meaning.

1 John iv. 2,
3.

In like manner, when St John says, “Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is *come in the flesh*, is of God ; and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God ;” he is proclaiming the true incarnation of the Son of God, against those who believed that he did not really assume a human nature, but only a shadowy resemblance of it, and of course denied a real crucifixion. It was against such “deceivers,” that he repeats the doctrine of his gospel, and appeals to the evidence of his own senses, as of all those who had conversed with Jesus, and “*seen and handled*” of “the Word of Life.”

2 John 7.

John i. 14.
1 John i. 1.

In vain, therefore, Unitarians catch at the mere *sound* of these words, as if they were intended to censure those who assigned to Christ any nature *besides* that of *the flesh*. Such could never be the aim of St John, the prominent doctrine of whose gospel is the *divinity of the Saviour*. See Bull, J. E. C. c. ii. n. 5—9. Waterland, vol. v. 187—195, and the authorities referred to in note K.

The *Socinians* admit St John to have respect to these heresies, in his epistles, though they put a different construction on his language. See Rees’s *Racov. Catech.* sect. iv. note 25, of Ben. Wissowatius.

NOTE Q. (p. 37.)

The meaning of the word ἀρπαγμὸν is much disputed. On the whole, the most ancient interpretation seems to be the most generally approved ; viz. “a thing to be snatch’d at” —“to be eagerly laid hold of.” Thus the meaning of this passage would be, that Christ, though subsisting in the true nature of God, was not impatient to exhibit himself as such, but content for awhile (on account of the end pro-

posed, "the joy that was set before him," of our salvation) Heb. xii. 2. to appear in the humbler form of man. On this point, as well as for the general scope of this passage, see Tillotson, *Serm. II. on John i. 14*; Pearson, pp. 155—159; Bishop Burnett, *Art. II.*; Waterland, vol. I. 12; II. 96—100; Bull, *D. F. N. sect. II. c. iii. n. 4*; c. iv. n. 7; *Pr. et Ap. Tr. c. vi. n. 19*; Dr S. Clarke, No. 934; comp. Dr Knight, ch. ii. No. 934; Potter, sect. iv.; Wardlaw, note N.

Dr Lardner gives the Orthodox, Arian, and Unitarian version of the whole passage (the latter being his own), in his "*Posthumous Discourses on the Trinity*," from this text. (vol. x.)

NOTE R. (p. 38.)

See, for the Socinian version, *Racov. Catech. sect. iv. ch. i*; and for the Unitarian, Lardner's "*Letter on the Logos*" (vol. xi. 89); and "*Posthumous Discourses on the Trinity*," *Disc. iv.* (vol. x.)

See also Wardlaw (p. 46), who quotes the paraphrase of Mr Belsham, on the parallel passage, *2 Cor. viii. 9*; "He was rich in miraculous powers, which it was *at his option* to employ *for his own benefit*." *At his option!* as if God, to a mere *human* messenger (such as Mr Belsham supposes Christ to have been) had parted with the control of the supernatural powers which he had entrusted to him.

He refers to the similar explication of the editors of the "*Improved Version*,"—the Unitarian text. See again Wardlaw, pp. 155—159.

Surely if the Apostle had intended to express the *Unitarian* view, he might have found language a little nearer to it.

NOTE S. (p. 38.)

It is not meant, that divine honour was now, for the *first* time, Christ's due; but that a *new occasion* now arose

for it, grounded on his *new relation* to us, in the recent character of *Redeemer*. Comp. John xvii. 5. with Rev. v. 9—14.

See Bull, Pr. et Ap. Tr. c. vi. n. 16—20. In John v. 22, 23, *Judgment* is assigned as a *new cause* of honour to him.

So in the *Old Testament*, often, and in Rev. iv. 11, *creation* is assigned as a ground of honour to the *Father*: and in Exod. xx. 2, 3, and Deut. v. 6, 7, his having *redeemed* the Israelites from slavery. Yet the Father had been *what he is*, without the creation; and to be honoured, without this mercy to his chosen people.

In like manner, for a particular occasion, one of several concurrent causes is frequently expressed in Scripture, *separately*, without its being intended to assert its *sole* efficacy. *Justification* is ascribed, separately, to *faith*, to *works*, to *words*.

Rom. iii. 28.
James ii. 21,
24.
Matt. xii. 37.

See Waterland, first Def. of Qu. xviii.; Pearson, 188—193. There is a full explication of this passage in Bishop Bull, Pr. et Ap. Tr. c. vi. n. 21—29.

NOTE T. (p. 41.)

“According to the Spirit of Holiness,” denotes Christ’s *divine* nature, as, “according to the flesh” does his human nature.

Bull states that the title of “Spirit”, and “Holy Spirit” (as meaning their divinity) was, in imitation of Scripture, often applied by the early Fathers of the Church, to *each* Person in the Trinity, D. F. N. sect. i. c. ii. n. 5; and that “The Spirit” in Christ, both in the usage of Scripture, and of the ancients, frequently denotes the divine nature in him. J. E. C. c. ii. n. 8; c. v. n. 5, 7.

“The Son of David according to the flesh, the Son of God in divinity and power,” is an expression of Ignatius, and seems a direct paraphrase of this text. See Wilson, p. 244.

NOTE V. (p. 42.)

Bull refers to Ignatius, Justin, and Irenæus, as arguing that it was absolutely necessary for the Saviour and Mediator between God and Man, to be *both God and Man*.

He adds, that this was the common sentiment of the early Christian Fathers. J. E. C. c. vii. n. 5. Waterland refers to Justin and Irenæus, vol. v. 241—2.

“Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given.” Is. ix. 6.
“Christ is called a *child* in respect to his *human*, a *son* with respect to his *divine* nature. The title of “*Wonderful*” refers to the wonderful mystery of the two-fold nature in the Son of God, and is well explained by Rev. xix. 12, where it is said of this person, that he had *a name written, which no man knew but himself*.” Vitringa. See Dodd’s Bible, ad loc.

NOTES TO SERMON II.

NOTE A. (p. 45.)

THE clearness and directness of the language of St Paul (as of that of St John) perplexes those who dispute the doctrine of Christ's perfect divinity. But unless his words bear the meaning we put upon them, we are at a loss to discover any reasonable motive for his employing them. That such is their *obvious, natural* purport, cannot be denied. They who would assign any other sense to them, do not find it in the *ordinary* force of such expressions, or in any modification of it suggested by the context, but by considerations altogether extrinsic. They allow themselves to decide what *should be* the scope of the Apostle, rather than take it from his words. Hence different sects adopt different interpretations; and there is no certain, and hence no useful instruction derived. Yet surely such language was intended to be the vehicle of important truth. To no other truth than that which it *obviously* expresses, and which *we* receive from it, was such language so well adapted as to account for its selection; at the certain risk, moreover, of *pernicious* misconstruction; as ours is, if it *be* a misconstruction. (See Sermon. I. note O.)

NOTE B. (p. 46.)

Allix, 221. The ancient Jews (before the time of Christ) believed in the eternity of the "Logos" or "Word," in whom they looked for the Messiah; and on the strength of this text, as well as others. (See note L, Sermon. I.)

It is contended that these expressions of Micah are not always intended to denote an *absolute eternity*. But the language is the same as that employed of the *Father*. Comp.

Ps. lv. 19; Hab. i. 12; Ps. xc. 2; xciii. 2; also Heb. xiii. 8, with Rev. i. 8. It is not customary in Scripture to describe the divine attributes in formal and definite propositions.

Dr S. Clarke admits that Prov. viii. was understood of Christ, by all the early Christian Fathers. (Sermon on 1 Cor. xii. 4, 5, 6, vol. vi. 118.)

We shall shortly see Christ's *own* assertions as to his eternal existence. On this doctrine, see Bull, D. F. N. sect. iii; Potter, sect. iv; and Waterland, vol. ii. Sermon vii; and first and second Def. of Qu. vii. Waterland comes to this conclusion: "The proof of the Son's eternity stands upon the same foot in Scripture with the proof of the Father's, and is expressed in as strong words."

Dr S. Clarke admits that "the Scripture, in declaring the Son's derivation from the Father, never makes mention of any limitation of *time*, but always supposes and affirms him to have existed with the Father, *from the beginning*, and *before all worlds*." And he censures those who, "pretending to be wise above what is written, and intruding into things they have not seen, presume to affirm that *there was a time when the Son was not*." (Script. Doctr. Pt. II. sect. xv. xvi.)

NOTE C. (p. 50.)

Mr Locke, seeing that St Mark (viii. 29) and St Luke (ix. 20), in relating this same conversation, make Peter merely to reply; "Thou art the Christ," or "the Christ of God;" would infer that the words, as recorded by St Matthew, "Thou art the Christ, *the Son of the living God*," amount but to the same thing as the single assertion; "Thou art the Christ."

But this is by no means a just conclusion. The Evangelists, not writing to the same people, or with the same immediate view, do not always quote the same conversations of Christ, or introduce the same circumstances; or, if quoting the same conversations, do not always report them with the same fulness. Something of this is admitted by Mr Locke, on another occasion, who grounds on it an argument of their

Reas. of
Chris-
tianity,
Works, vi.
55, 56.

Vol. vi. 187,
8.

sincerity, since it shews that there was no concert between them. Hence it is never safe to conclude, that one of them who tells what another has omitted, means nothing by his supplement.

Pp. 70, 71.

That such an inference would be erroneous in the present instance, is established by a fact acutely observed upon by Mr Wilson. The two evangelists who omit the latter clause of the confession of Peter, "*the Son of the living God*," also omit the remarkable words of our Saviour in reply; "*Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in Heaven*:" thus shewing their perfect knowledge to which clause *these words applied*; and that *this* clause had a far different sense from *the other*, which merely owned Jesus for the "*Christ*." It was the confession of him as "*the Son of God*," which alone was *inspired from Heaven*. Besides, many had already anticipated Peter in the confession of Jesus as the *Messiah*. See John i. 41, 45, 49, and iv. 29, 42. It was in this character the apostles had all along devoted themselves to him.

The assertions of Christ in Luke x. 22, wherein ignorance is imputed both of *the Father* and *the Son*, must regard their *natural relation*. When it is said; "No one knows who the Father is but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him;" it cannot be intended that no one knows *who God is*; but that no one knows him in his true relation of *Father*, to a Son in *his own proper nature*. And so as to "the Son;" the ignorance of him is in *this* character, not in that of the *Messias*, in which he was already known to many. (See Sermon III. note N.)

NOTE D. (p. 50.)

Bull considers these words as by no means an unmeaning repetition of the preceding assertion, but as having express view to the errors of the Cerinthians. These heretics, who grafted so much of their former superstition on the Gospel, that they are rather to be considered as Pagans than Christians, held that the world was the work of inferior spirits, independently of the supreme God. To confute them, St

John is thought to have expressly stated, that all things were made by "the Word"—himself "God,"—and that even the spirits or angels themselves were his work, no creature being created but by him. Some are of opinion that the words of St Paul (Col. i. 16) have reference to the same erroneous doctrine. See Bull, J. E. C. c. ii. n. 4; Waterland, vol. v. 182.

The words of St Paul, in the verse preceding that just alluded to, have given occasion to much discussion: *ὅς ἐστιν* Col. i. 15. (*εἰκὼν τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ ἀορατοῦ*) *πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως*—"who is (the image of the invisible God) *the first-born of every creature.*" Our version is ambiguous, and seems to include Christ among the creatures, *all* of whom, it is yet said, he made; so that this cannot have been intended.

The real meaning of the passage in the original is, "*born before the whole creation,*" agreeably to v. 17; "He is before all things;" and to John i. 1. This use of the superlative for the comparative is instanced in John i. 15, where *πρωτός μου* is properly rendered, "before me."

Wall gives an extract from the creed of Eusebius, presented to the council of Nice, as one which had been always used in his diocese of Cæsarea. It contains the above words, and immediately after them, what may be considered as a paraphrase of them; *πρὸ πάντων αἰώνων ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ Πατρὸς γεγεννημένον*, "begotten of God the Father before all worlds." Wall, vol. ii. 348.

Bishop Burgess supports this meaning of the words from *Hermas*: "Antiquior omni creatura." Tracts, p. 241, note.

Pearson puts a like construction on them, p. 148.

So *Waterland*, vol. ii. 35, and again 91.

Bull gives the views of *Athanasius* on this passage. D. F. N. sect. iii. c. ix. n. 9.

Horsley says the words are equivalent to *ὁ τεχθεὶς πρὸ πάσης κτίσεως*, "He who was born, or begotten, before any creation, or before any thing was made."

Whitby represents the meaning to be, "*Christum præ mundo genitum, et creaturis omnibus antiquiorem;*" and, as he adds, "*Secundum unanimum antiquorum omnium sensum.*" (Tract, p. 40.)

Dr S. Clarke says: "It is observable, that St Paul does

not here call our Saviour *πρωτόκτιστον πάσης κτίσεως*—the first *created* of all creatures; but *πρωτότοκον*, π. κ. the first-born of every creature; the first-begotten before all creatures; signifying that he was (before the creation of things) *τεκεῖς*—*brought forth*—*produced by*, or *derived from* the Father, but not declaring in what *manner*.” (Ser. Doctr. No. 937.)

Tillotson suggests, in addition to the above interpretations, that the “first-born” being also the “heir,” the word came to have the sense of *property* or *dominion*, and may be understood so here, and rendered, “*Lord of the whole Creation*.” (Serm. I. and II. on John i. 14.)

So also *Potter* (p. 140.)

Dr Gill would throw the accent on the penult, (*πρωτοτόκος*), and render, “The first *parent*, *bringer-forth*, or *producer*, of every creature. (ch. vi).”

In Dodd’s Bible, after the above interpretations, it is suggested that the word may be meant to express that Christ produced all the creatures of the world as his *first effort* of creative power; in the sense in which the word is applied to animals bringing forth their *first* young. Reference is made to Homer, *Iliad* P. 9.

NOTE E. (p. 51.)

The same prepositions (*δια* and *εἰς*), which are rendered “by,” and “for,” in this place, are employed of the *Father*, with reference to the creation, in Rom. xi. 36; and the former again, in Heb. ii. 10. Whatever kind of authorship, then, is ascribed by them to him, must needs be intended by them of the Son. See Waterland, i. 132; ii. 28; Gill, ch. vi.

NOTE F. (p. 53.)

For the force of the argument for the divinity of our Lord from the worship required for him, see Waterland, first and second Def. of Qu. xvi. xvii. and xviii; Potter, beg. of sect. iv; Bull, Pr. et Ap. Tr. c. vi; Whitby’s

Tract, c. i. sect. i—x; Wardlaw, 119—134; Mr Wm. Hey's Tract, p. 24, &c.

The distinctive mark of *Christians*, before they took this name, was, that they "*called upon the name of the Lord*" ("Jesus Christ").

Acts ix. 14,
21; xxii. 16.
1 Cor. i. 2.
2 Tim. ii. 22.

Whitby (Tract, c. i. sect. vi.) shews that this expression implies prayer and worship, referring to 1 Kings xviii. 24; 2 Kings v. 11; Ps. cxvi. 13, 17; and other texts.

Not only the *Arians*, but the *Socinians*, fully admit the force of the texts which direct prayer to be offered to Christ, and his possession of those present attributes and powers, which enable him to hear, and to grant the petitions addressed to him.

The *latter* allege examples of prayer offered to him by his Apostles, while he was *on earth*.

Luke xvii. 5.
Matt. viii.
25.

Socinus did not allow the character of *Christian* to those who refused this worship of our Lord. He held public disputations with those who denied its propriety, and conducted the prosecution of one opponent of this doctrine, who died in prison. See Toulmin's Life of him, ch. iii. sect. 11; his "*Disputatio de Adoratione Christi*," with Francken, and his "*Theses et Antitheses*," presenting the opposite arguments of David and himself. Also, Rees's Rac. Cat. sect. v. ch. i; and Stillingf. Disc. on the Trin. ch. viii.

Waterland, Potter, Bull, and Whitby, (as above referred to) shew the inconsistency of these admissions of the Arians and Socinians, with any view of Christ's nature, short of his perfect deity.

See also note C, Sermon 1; and note R of this Sermon.

NOTE G. (p. 53.)

The word Θεόν—"God," is not in the original text, but is supplied in our version, and accordingly printed in italics. The sense is more consistent without it, and the proof of Christ's divinity from prayer offered to him, is equally supported by this passage. It is clearly meant that *he is called upon*, who is addressed; viz. the "*Lord Jesus*."

Dr Whitby (Tract, p. 19) renders, "*invocantem et di-*

centem (ei nempe quem invocabat"). Dr S. Clarke, similarly (Script. Doctr. No. 691). See also Horsley, Tracts, p. 233 ; and Wardlaw, p. 126.

The Unitarians, to get over this clear authority for praying to Christ, say ; " This address of Stephen to Jesus, when he actually *saw* him, does not authorise us to offer prayers to him, now that he is *invisible*" !! " Improved version," note. See Wardlaw, 127, note, and his remarks.

NOTE H. (p. 54.)

Dr Whitby says, that Θεότης—*Godhead*—never has the meaning of divine *gifts* or *doctrine*, but only of the very *nature* and *essence* of God ; and that it could not, in the sense of *gifts* or *doctrine*, with propriety be said, κατοικεῖν σωματικῶς, to *dwell bodily* in Jesus. He refers to the authority of Tertullian, Origen, and others. Tract, c. i. sect. 25.

See also Waterland, vol. II. 156, 8 ; and Wm. Hey's Tract, 102—104. Whitby, after adopting the Arian views of Dr S. Clarke, endeavoured to escape from his previous declaration, and supposed πληρωμα to mean " the *complete ability*," and Θεότης, " that divine *person*, who is God." " Last Thoughts," p. 99.

NOTE I. (p. 55.)

Compare Exod. iii. 14. " The expression ' I am,' " as here employed, not only denotes a *present* being, but a *priority* of existence, with a *continuation of it* to the present time." Pearson, p. 143.

" Before Abraham was, I am"—the obvious sense of which words (says Tillotson) is, that " he had a real existence before Abraham was actually in being."

Again : " I cannot but observe further, that our Saviour does not say, ' before Abraham was, I *was* ;' but ' before Abraham was, I *AM* ;' " which is the proper *name of God*, whereby is signified the *eternal duration and permanency* of his being. In which sense he (*i.e.* our Saviour) is said by

the apostle to the Hebrews, to be "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." (Sermon II. on John i. 14.)

The Socinians endeavour to evade the true force of this passage, by supposing our Lord to mean that *he was, before Abraham's time, pre-existent in the divine foreknowledge and appointment.* But this would not have enabled him to "*see Abraham,*" which was the claim the Jews objected to him, and which they thought could not be true, on account of his youth; and which he evidently intends to re-assert by these words. Thus the Jews understood these words, and not as the Socinians.

See Pearson and Tillotson as above; Whitby's Tract, p. 115; Wardlaw, 84—89; Allix, p. 244.

Dr S. Clarke rejects the Socinian interpretation as "languid and unnatural;" and adds; "The plain meaning is, that Christ was really with God, in the beginning, and before the world was; agreeably to John i. 1, and xvii. 5."

He admits, too, that Christ may have intended also to insinuate, in the expression "*I am,*" his "*peculiar manner of existence;* and his being that person in whom should be "*the name of God*" ("Jehovah," or, "I am"). Exod. xxiii. 21; iii. 14. (Script. Doctr. No. 591).

NOTE K. (p. 57.)

On this account, the resurrection of Christ is made so much of as an *evidence*. It is twice referred to by our Lord during his life, as preeminently "*a sign;*" and in one instance, as the "*only sign.*" (John ii. 18—21; Matt. xii. 39, 40).

Christ's resurrection is, indeed, elsewhere ascribed to the *Father*: but only as the *creation* is said now to be of one, now of the other, because whatsoever the Son doeth, he is said to do it from the Father; and whatsoever the Father doth, he doth it by the Son. See Bull, J. E. C. c. v. n. 5.

It is argued by Unitarians, on the strength of Acts xiii. 32, 33, compared with Ps. ii. 7, that what is intended by Christ's being the "Son of God," is merely, that "God

raised him from the dead." But in Scripture, things are said *to be*, when it is merely intended that they are then *manifested, declared*, which St Paul here shews to be the sense of Ps. ii. 7—"declared to be the Son of God with power, by resurrection from the dead." Christ had before been proclaimed to be the Son of God, at his baptism: he could not, then, *first* become so at his *resurrection*. See Bull, J. E. C. c. v. n. 7; Gill, c. vii; Waterland, I. 95—97, 102.

NOTE L. (p. 58.)

John i. 1.

Dr Clarke admits, with respect to the parallel passage (Mark ii. 5—7), that our Lord "probably meant to give to his disciples some intimation, of what they could not then, but were afterwards to understand, that he was ($\Lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ Θεός) that "Word (which) was in the beginning with God, and was God." He quotes and translates a passage of Irenæus to this effect; "Our Lord, when he forgave sins, at the same time healed the man, and plainly declared who himself was. For if none can forgive sins but *God only*, and yet our Lord did forgive sins, and heal men; 'tis plain that he was "*the Word of God*," made the "Son of Man," and receiving from his Father the power of forgiving sins, because he was man, and because he *was God*." (See Doctr. No. 580.) Athanasius made much of this text. See Bingham's Orig. Eccles. B. xix. ch. i. sect. 1; also Allix, 240, who refers to Jer. xxxi. 34. Comp. Luke vii. 47—49; Acts vii. 60; Col. iii. 13.

NOTE M. (p. 62.)

That baptism should be adopted by John without explanation, as a mode of acknowledging his mission, is a proof, if any were wanted, of its being familiar to the Jews.

For the arguments for the divinity of Christ from this text, see Waterland, vol. II. Sermon viii; see also Stillingfleet, "Disc. on the Trin." ch. ix.

For the explanation of certain passages in the Acts of the Apostles, where baptism is spoken of "in the name of the Lord Jesus" alone (meaning baptism into the Gospel dispensation, preached by him, *but after this form*, as prescribed by him), see Waterland's Sermon. as above; Lightfoot, vol. III. 184; vi. 391—416; xi. 364; Bingham, Orig. Eccl. B. XI. ch. iii; Wall's Hist. of Inf. Baptism, II. 257, 258; Pearson, p. 43, 364.

It is clear from Acts xix. 1—5, that the *Holy Ghost* was included in the Apostolical form of Baptism, thus briefly alluded to as "baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus."

For the history of the creeds successively employed in baptism, see Bull, J. E. C. c. iv. v. vi. with Grabe's notes; Wall's Hist. of Inf. Bapt. vol. II. ch. lx; Waterl. vol. II. Sermon. VIII; Bingham, Orig. Eccl. B. X. ch. iv; and Berri-man.

NOTE N. (p. 68.)

In Acts xx. 28, our version gives "The Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." Here the word "God," referring to him who "purchased the Church with his own blood," is evidently intended to designate Christ; who, being both God and man, "purchased the Church" by what belonged to him in the latter nature. It is, therefore, another instance of his being called expressly, "God."

Comp. Heb.
ix. 12.

This reading of our version however is disputed, and Griesbach considers the authority of ancient manuscripts to be in favour of, *κυρίου*, rather than, *Θεοῦ*—"the Church of the Lord," rather than the Church of God.

Pearson contends for our reading, p. 164 and note r; Mr Wilson gives the reasoning in its favour (p. 238, note); Waterland (vol. v. 39) refers to Mills in loc.; Dr J. Clarke does not decide against it (Script. Doctr. No. 538), though he would not interpret it as we do. See also Wardlaw, p. 153.

"Church of God" is a customary expression in the New Testament; "Church of the Lord," is not so.

1 Cor. i. 2;
x. 32; xi. 22;
xv. 9; Gal. i.
13; 1 Tim.
iii. 5;
2 Cor. i. 1.

However, if we adopt the reading, "Church of the Lord," it is still an example of what is here asserted; that the "Church," which is called, "of *God*," is also represented as the "Church of *Christ*;" for *he* is clearly intended under either title, in this text.

NOTE O. (p. 73.)

It is argued, on the ground of grammatical construction, from there being but one article used, in the original (τοῦ μεγάλου Θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν), that the titles, "*great God*," and, "*our Saviour*," both designate one person, viz. Christ. If so, he is here called "great God."

Waterland reasons for this construction, and refers to several of the ancient Fathers in support of it, and states that there is no conflicting interpretation. Vol. II. 128—131.

Bishop Burgess treats the question at length in his Tracts on the Div. of Christ. (See "Vindication of Mr Sharpe's rule.")

Wardlaw refers to "Middleton on the Greek Article," and also to the early Editions of the English Bible, and exposes the unfairness of the Unitarian Critics. (p. 76, and note F). *Whitby* reasons for this meaning, from the general form of expression, and refers to Clemens, and other early Fathers (Tract, p. 44). *Bull* also refers to Clemens. (D. F. N. sect. II. c. vi. n. 2).

Other passages involving a similar construction, are Col. iii. 17; 1 Thess. i. 3; 1 Cor. xv. 24; 2 Cor. i. 3; xi. 31; Eph. v. 20; 2 Pet. i. 1. If, in Col. iii. 17, ("giving thanks unto God and the Father"), the same person be intended; why not in Tit. ii. 13, ("the appearance of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ")? especially since, as *Whitby* observes, when St Paul makes mention of any ἐπιφάνεια ("appearance") to be looked for, it is always that of *Christ*. See 2 Thess. ii. 8; 1 Tim. vi. 14; 2 Tim. iv. 1.

Tr. p. 44;
Burgess,
246.

NOTE P. (p. 73.)

See Luke i. 16, 17; iii. 4; comp. i. 76. See Serm I. pp. 14—16.

See Waterland, i. 41 ; ii. 121—3 ; Pearson, pp. 186, 7 ; Horsley, p. 558 ; Allix, 236, 249, who refers to Luke ii. 11 ; Matt. xxviii. 6.

NOTE Q. (p. 77.)

The Unitarians, sensible of the force of this argument, are driven to seek some evasion of it. They regard “the song of Moses, and the song of the Lamb,” as an allusion to worship offered *by Christ* to the Father in heaven. (See “Comparative View of the Scriptural Evidence for Unitarianism and Trinitarianism,” p. 36. London, 1823. Hunter.)

But the song is not said to be sung *by* Moses and the Lamb, but by those who had “gotten the victory.”

Rev. xv. 2.

Besides, the song of Moses was sung by him *on earth*. Consequently, whatever be meant by the “song of the Lamb”—if any “glorifying of his Father” by him—the inference would be, that it also took place *on earth*.

Deut. xxxii. 11.

See John xvii. 4.

But the true purport is obvious. One song only is before spoken of in connexion with the Lamb, and that as sung, not by him to the Father, but in *honour of him*, by the “four and twenty elders.” To this, allusion is doubtless here made. Thus the words have a force directly opposite to that which Unitarians would assign to them. Praise is ascribed by them *to the Father and the Lamb together*, as “Lord God Almighty,” in the words of Moses and of the four and twenty elders.

Rev. v. 8, 9.

The pointed distinction between Moses and Christ, already twice noticed, is preserved here. Moses is called the *servant* of God ; not so Christ, though mentioned in connexion with him.

pp. 22, 23, and 66.

NOTE R. (p. 80.)

That the heathens acknowledged *one supreme* God and Creator, and that their idolatry consisted in worshipping inferior deities with him, has been already stated (Sermon i.

p. 6, note.) See Cudworth. Intell. Syst. ch. iv., especially vol. II. 356—443.

The sin of the Israelites, all along, was the same. They did not wholly neglect the worship of the true God, but associated the gods of the gentiles “in the honour due unto him only.” See 1 Sam. vii. 1 Kings xi. Such also was the religion of the mixed inhabitants of Samaria, after the captivity of the ten tribes. See 2 Kings xvii. 27—41.

III. 199.

Dr Cudworth shews that the *Arians* were expressly charged by the orthodox fathers with having “*paganized* and *idolatrized*” Christianity, by offering worship to Christ, while they held him to have been *created* by the Father, as other creatures, though superior to all. And this reproach was held equally to apply to them, whether they paid the *same* worship to Christ as to the Father, or only an *inferior* worship. The same objection, therefore, applies to the *Socinians* also, who worship Christ as a man, exercising in heaven the powers of God; but with a different worship from that which they offer to God himself. The objection applies, on the same ground, to the *Romish worship of saints*. Dr Cudworth draws this inference. His words are: “They who excuse themselves from being idolaters no otherwise than because they do not give that very *same* religious worship to saints and angels, which is *peculiar to God Almighty*, and consists in honouring him as self-existent and the Creator of all things, but acknowledge those others to be creatures; suppose *that* to be necessary to idolatry, which is absolutely impossible; viz. to acknowledge more omnipotents, as creators of all, than one, or to account creatures, as such, creators; as they imply all those to be incapable of idolatry, who acknowledge one supreme God, the Creator of the whole world; which is directly contradictory to the ancient Church.” See Waterland’s First and Second Def. of Qu. xvi. xvii. xviii.; Bull, Pr. et Ap. Tr. c. vi.; Potter, beg. of sect. iv.; also, Stillingfleet, Sermon on 1 Tim. i. 15; “Disc. on the Trin.” ch. viii.; Tillotson. end of Sermon II. on John i. 14; and Whitby’s Tract, c. i.

III. 206.

Certainly it was to be expected, after the many unqualified prohibitions of *creature-worship* in the Old Tes-

tament, that if it were the purport of the Almighty now to permit it, he would formally cancel his former prohibitions, and assign some ground for so striking a change in his counsels. This he has nowhere done.

NOTE S. (p. 80.)

The grammatical construction of this sentence makes the word, "this," to refer to "Christ," the nearest antecedent, and so declares him to be the "True God." That this is also the true construction, may be inferred from the accompanying title of "Eternal Life," which is employed of him in the beginning of this same Epistle (c. i. v. 2.); compare John i. 1.

See on this point, Pearson, pp. 168, 9, and notes x, y; and Wardlaw, p. 57, who argues the question fully; also, Waterland, vol. ii. 123; and Dr J. Knight, No. 410.

NOTE T. (p. 81.)

This assertion of the divinity of our Saviour (already noticed, Sermon i. p. 41) is the more striking, from its following immediately after a reference to his human nature, and in pointed distinction from it: "Of whom, *as concerning the flesh*, Christ came, who is over all, *God blessed for ever*." It is clearly meant to intimate that he came but *in part* of the "seed of David;" that he had another nature, which the latter clause is to set forth: and the description of this other nature is, that he is "God blessed for ever."

The Unitarians are hard pressed to bring this passage to any agreement with their views. The word "God" stands in their way. Some are for leaving it out, on the gratuitous assumption of its having been interpolated. Others turn the clause into a mere exclamation; as if the apostle had only meant to say by it; "God be praised!"

See Mark
xiv. 61.
2 Cor. xi. 31.
Rom. i. 25.

Even should the former solution be adopted and the word "God" be omitted, it would not destroy the testimony which the text bears to the deity of Christ. For he would still be pronounced, "blessed for ever"—a form of speech exclusively appropriated, in Scripture, to God; as also in the *usage of the Jews*.

Whitby shews from the ancients the reading of our version to be the true one. Tract, pp. 47, 48; see also Pearson, p. 169, and notes a—d; Waterland. ii. 133—6; Wardlaw, pp. 68—72; Whitby, in his "Last Thoughts," endeavours to escape from his previous testimony in favour of the received construction; but he is driven to strained explanations.

NOTE V. (p. 81.)

Christ replies; "Because thou hast seen me (*i.e.* hast seen me *risen from the dead*—the great proof that I am "the Son of God with power") thou hast believed;" *i.e.* believed me to be "*Lord and God*." Thus Christ accepts his confession, and his worship.

Why, if Christ was *not God*, did he not rebuke Thomas, as the angel did St John? Why did he not "rend his clothes," and "stop his ears" as hearing "blasphemy?" See what is said of *Herod*, for listening to the flattery, that his was "the voice of a God, and not of a man."

Rev. xxii. 9.
Acts xiv. 14;
vii. 57; x.
25, 26.
Acts xii. 22,
23.

Whitby (Tract, p. 47) says, the ancient fathers believed that, far from reproving, Christ *applauded* Thomas for this confession; a proof that it was in no ways derogatory to the honour of the Father. He argues justly, that as Thomas *knew but of one nature of God*, he could intend no other by this name. He could not mean a *creature-God*, such as the Arians subsequently invented; or a God *by office*, after the more modern fancy of the Socinians. See also Pearson, p. 168, and note u.

Dr Grabe, in his notes to Bull, D. F. N. sect. ii. c. x., cites the following summary of the evidence for the Deity of Christ (grounded on the above and some other texts which have been quoted), from a work ascribed to Novatian,

a celebrated writer of the third century. "Quòd si cum nullius sit nisi DEI, cordis nòsse secreta, Christus secreta conspiciit cordis; quòd si, cum nullius sit nisi DEI, peccata dimittere, idem Christus peccata dimittit; quòd si, cum nullius sit hominis de cœlo venire, de cœlo veniendo descendit; quòd si, cum nullius hominis hæc vox esse possit, *Ego et Pater unum sumus*, hanc vocem de conscientia Divinitatis Christus solus edicit; quòd si postremò, omnibus Divinitatis Christi probationibus et rebus instructus, Apostolus Thomas, respondens Christo, *Dominus meus et DEUS meus*, dicit; quòd si et Apostolus Paulus; *quorum*, inquit, *Patres*, et ex quibus Christus secundum carnem, qui est super omnia DEUS benedictus in secula, in suis literis scribit; quòd si idem se Apostolum non ab hominibus, aut per hominem, sed per Jesum Christum esse depromit; quòd si idem Evangelium non se ab hominibus didicisse aut per hominem, sed per Jesum Christum accepisse contendit; meritò DEUS est Christus."

NOTES TO SERMON III.

NOTE A. (p. 82.)

Serm. i. p.
26, and note
L; see Allix,
p. 124.

It is not meant, in what has been said on this subject, to assert that the Jews combined their notions of the Trinity into a formal creed, or that "they had as distinct notions upon it as we have," or that such knowledge was universal among them. They had no such accurate and general belief touching the *office* and *character* of the "Messiah." But it is true, that, while they held firmly the doctrine of God's unity, as against the imaginary deities of the heathen, some at least among them gathered, from an attentive consideration of the Scriptures, the existence of *three* divine Persons, whom they regarded as instrumental in the creation of all things: and they looked upon one of these, other than the Father, as the immediate organ of the divine dealings and communications with their forefathers; and in him, incarnate, expected their future Messiah.

It certainly helps to confirm our confidence in the doctrine of a Trinity, as grounded on the Gospel, that such traces of it are found in this prior and preparatory revelation; just as the evidence of *prophecy* is a valuable corroboration of the truth of Christ's divine mission.

The circumstance, that this knowledge was nearly obliterated among the Jews at the time of our Lord's advent, is a further confirmation of the truth. For thus the apostles are freed from the imputation of having been biassed by preconceived expectations, in construing the language of their Master. Their *prejudices* lay all *the other way*; so that they were sure to consider his meaning well, and to require strong evidence of it, before they received his words in so unsuspected and *improbable* a sense.

It is justly objected to Dr S. Clarke, that in a work which he chose to entitle "The Scripture Doctrine of the

Trinity," he has taken no notice whatever of the intimations of it found in the Old Testament. See Bishop Van Mildert's "Life of Waterland," (p. 47), and Waterland, vol. II. 118.

NOTE B. (p. 86.)

Bishop Pearson says, that at the time of our Lord's advent, "All the Jews, as they looked for a Messias to come, so they believed that Messias to be the Son of God (although since the coming of our Saviour they have denied it): and that, by reason of a constant interpretation of the second psalm, as appropriated unto him." He means by "Son of God," one by *nature* such; a *divine Being*. p. 134.

Allix, Horsley after him (Tracts, p. 242), and Macknight (Harmony of the Gospels, vol. I. 358, note), agree with Pearson. Mr Hey (Lect. B. IV, Art. II. sect. i.) is, on the contrary, of opinion, that the Jews of our Saviour's time had, *practically* at least, no such expectation, but looked for a deliverance by a mere *temporal prince*. Mr Wilson has, I think clearly shewn this to be generally true, in the early part of his work, called "An Illustration of the Method of explaining the New Testament, by the early opinions of Jews and Christians concerning Christ," lately re-edited by Dr Turton, the Dean of Westminster; who says of it, that "it is in his estimation one of the most valuable productions that have ever appeared on any subject:" a strong testimonial, from a person of so great learning, accuracy, and caution. I have freely availed myself of Mr Wilson's views.

Mr Wilson classes Bishop Bull with Pearson, Allix, &c. p. 3. But Bull only supposes a *few of the more acute* of the Jewish doctors *not to have been altogether ignorant* of the purport of ancient prophecy, as to the two-fold nature of the Messiah (neque hoc *prorsus ignorasse perspicaciores nonnullos* ex Hebræorum magistris); and that for the most part they had a mean and low notion of the nature of their Messiah, expecting him in the mere character of a man: (maximam partem *πτωχῶς καὶ ταπεινῶς*, *humiliter atque abjecte* de Messia suo sensisse, J. E. C. c. i. n. 13. nihil aliud quàm hominem ipsum futurum existimantes. Id. c. v. n. 8. And

again, c. v. n. 8). And he elsewhere shews that Justin
 Id. c. vii. n. 5. Martyr¹ thus represents the opinions of the Jews.

This view of Bull's is probably the nearest of all to the truth. The *generality* of Jews now looked for a mere human deliverer; while a *few*, more studious of the Scriptures and of the ancient interpretations of it, had some traditional expectations that the Messiah would be of a *divine* nature. The notions of these were (as Hey supposes in the passage above referred to) not definite or distinct, or such as had practically much influence upon them.

NOTE C. (p. 87.)

The Jews of every age have held the doctrine inculcated in this passage, viz. that miracles are no proof of divine sanction, in one inviting to *worship other than the "Lord God of Israel:"* assigning as a reason, "that the evidence of the *understanding*, which teaches the *falsity* of his professions, is of more weight than that of *the eyes*, which see his miracles." (See Wilson, ch. ii. Pearson, 181). These are the words of Maimonides, a learned Jew of the twelfth century. His reasoning may be compared with that of Barrow, Sermon on Col. iii. 2. end of § 4. and beginning of § 5².

Some Jews have even thought this law in Deut. xiii. "to have been framed against the *individual case* of Jesus Christ." He is particularly pointed out, they contend, in one of the clauses: "If thy brother, the *son of thy mother*, entice thee secretly," &c. "This is Jesus (say they), who denied his father, saying that he had a *mother*, but not a father;

¹ The true drift of the passage in Justin to which he refers, has been disputed. But the Bishop of Lincoln shews that the construction of it which Bull adopts, is the accurate one. See his Justin, p. 25, note.

² Cudworth gives it as his opinion, that such wonders would be wrought by *evil Spirits*, to mislead men, God only "not interposing to hinder them for this reason, that he might hereby prove and try the faithfulness of his people towards him." Vol. III. 355.

that he was the Son of God, and God.”—See Wilson, ch. II. where the question as to the law which Jesus was considered to have violated, and for the breach of which he was condemned, is fully and ably discussed.

NOTE D. (p. 89.)

In the Jewish *oral* law, *blasphemy* and *idolatry* were crimes nearly allied, and were punished in the same manner, and differently from *any other offence*; the criminals, *after being stoned*, being affixed to a cross. Comp. Lev. xxiv. 15, 16.
Deut. xvii. 2—6.

The *former* offence consisted in *words* spoken against the majesty of God; the other, in *actions* of a like tendency. Their resemblance caused them to be sometimes confounded. In Ezek. xx. 27, 28, *Idolatry*, the *owning another God*, is characterised as *blasphemy*. *Neither* of them has any thing in common with *imposture*; i. e. with *falsely* pretending to a *divine mission*.

Such an impostor also was to be visited with death; but a specific proof of his guilt was required, viz. the *failure of some miracle* promised by him, or of something *predicted* by him; an evidence of guilt which no one pretended, or ever thought of, against Jesus. It was in his mere *language* that they found his offence—*blasphemy*—words spoken against the honour of God. It involved idolatry also: for by “making himself God,” he “spake against God” (as they imagined), and also “spake in the name of *another* God.” Thus he was self-condemned, and required no evidence but of his words. See Wilson, ch. II. Deut. xviii. 20.

Stillfleet observes, that the sin of seducing to the worship of another God has a punishment expressly specified, viz. that of “*stoning*;” whereas, when the offence is, the falsely pretending to *be a prophet of God*, the mode of punishment is *not* named; and that *strangling* was always understood by the Jews to be intended, in the law of Moses, where no particular death is prescribed. Hence the readiness which they on all occasions shewed to “*stone*” Jesus, shews what they considered to be the law which he had violated, and Orig. Sacr. B. II. ch. v.
Comp. Deut. xviii. 20; xiii. 9, 10; xvii. 2—6.

what the nature of his offence ; viz. the law and the offence laid down in Deut. xiii.

His actual punishment was one prescribed by the *Roman*, not by the *Jewish* law ; being inflicted by a Roman tribunal.

NOTE E. (p. 89.)

On *one* occasion, some of the Jews would have apprehended him for lofty and mysterious language, in which he insinuated a promise of the Holy Spirit to his disciples ; though others, on account of it, looked upon him as “the Prophet,” and “the Christ.” But this was shortly after offence given, and suspicion raised, by expressions implying his pre-existence, and *divine nature*.

NOTE F. (p. 91.)

On *six* occasions the Jews charged Jesus with “blasphemy,” or would have dealt with him as guilty of it ; and it was, on every one of them, for language insinuating his *divine nature*,—on *none*, for a mere claim to a *divine mission*. See John v. 18 ; vi. 41, 42, compared with vii. 1 ; viii. 59 ; x. 31, 39 ; Luke v. 21 ; Matt. ix. 3 ; xxvi. 65 ; and Luke xxii. 71.

On one other ground only did the Jews “seek to kill him,” viz. for a supposed violation of the Sabbath day. But this also was an offence to which their law assigned the punishment of death.

In one instance, when he implied his divine nature but in terms of which the Jews did not seize the full meaning, St John (who well understood him, at least by the time he wrote his gospel) remarks, as a matter of just surprise, that “*no man laid hands on him.*” And he proceeds to account for it, by informing us that “they understood not that he spake to them of the Father ;” i. e. *of God, as his Father*. Here we see plainly what the Evangelist knew to be the customary motive of their violence.

In the beginning of the same discourse, Jesus had proclaimed himself “the light of the world,” and as affording

“the light of life” — expressions sufficiently setting forth his pretensions to be, at the least, a *prophet*. But no clamour was raised against him on *this* account. Even the Pharisees objected not that *this* pretension was an *offence*, but merely to his want of other witness than his own: “Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not *true*.” John viii. 13.

NOTE G. (p. 92.)

It is added, “and the resurrection,” because it was common to urge this event as a proof of his divinity; “he was declared to be the Son of God with power, by the *resurrection from the dead*.” (See Sermon II. note K, and the passage to which it refers.) Rom. i. 4.

The charge against Stephen was, that he “spake blasphemous words against Moses and against God.” The “blasphemous words against Moses” were, that he foretold the abrogation of the law promulgated through him. It cannot be that he spake other blasphemy *against God*, than in preaching Christ as also God. In this character, and the glory of it, he professed afterwards to behold him, and was immediately *stoned*. (See note D; also Horsley’s Tracts, pp. 232—3.) Acts vi. 11.

NOTE H. (p. 93.)

Mr Locke repeatedly informs us that the Jews looked for only *one prophet more*—only *one* extraordinary messenger from God—*one* only worker of miracles, viz. the Messiah. Wherefore, whenever Jesus asserted that he “came from God,” or by miracles or otherwise intimated his divine mission, it was virtually an assertion of his being that personage. It could not, then, be for a proof of *this* pretension that they waited, for he had made almost a daily avowal of it. vol. vi. 32, 49, 53.

Besides, Mr Locke expressly admits that, before his trial, when notwithstanding they were driven to *seek for witnesses*, Jesus had *thrown off all the reserve* which he (Mr Locke) wrongly, as I must think, imputes to him, or rather greatly vol. vi. 66, 67.

exaggerates, as to his *pretension to be the Messiah*; and that his public entry into Jerusalem was an *open proclamation* of it, which Jesus admitted to the *Pharisees themselves*.

Matt. xxii.
15.

Hence when, after this, "They took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk," it was not for the purpose of drawing forth a clearer avowal of his being the Christ, but of such a sentence touching the legality of tribute, as might render him, in that character, an object of jealousy to the Romans. So St Luke expressly states. The denial of this legality could not be a crime by *Jewish law*, or *Jewish opinion*. They wanted, in order to justify *themselves* in seeking his death, a proof of his claim *to be God*; of which they knew they had good ground to suspect him, and of which they sought witness; and of which when they could not obtain sufficient evidence, they appealed to himself for it.

Luke xx. 20;
comp. xxiii.
2.

NOTE I. (p. 93.)

Mark xiv. 56.

The true purport of the original words (*ἴσαι αἱ μαρτυρίαι οὐκ ἦσαν*), which are rendered in our version by "their witness agreed not together," seems rather to be—"their evidence was *inadequate*"—"came not up to the point desired;" which was, to have something against him to take away his life—was insufficient to afford a legal ground of condemnation. See Wilson, p. 78; Locke, vi. 76.

NOTE K. (p. 96.)

vi. 76—77,
370.

Mr Locke admits that the questions were put *separately*, as St Luke represents, and that Jesus refused to answer directly to the *first*, but to the *second* made an open confession; a clear proof, as it should seem, that they were of different purport.

See note I.

To avoid this conclusion, which would militate with his view that the two titles "Messiah" and "Son of God" are identical; Mr Locke supposes that Jesus preferred to confess himself as the "*Messiah*" by the title of "*Son of God*," because though the Jews, as he would

have us think, would understand the same thing by the latter title as by the former, and nothing more, it would afford a less effectual handle for their charge against him before Pilate. But Pilate would needs, *in any case*, take the nature of his offence from *them*. And this supposition of Mr Locke's is at variance with the account given by the evangelists. For after all, according to their narrative, the Jews in the first instance taxed him with making himself *Messiah, a King*; and only Comp. St John and St Luke. afterwards, with making himself the "*Son of God*." According to Mr Locke's view, this would be to make the charge in the *most* intelligible language (to the Romans) first; and when Pilate disregarded it, to renew the *same charge*, in *less* intelligible, and also *less offensive*, language.

It is clear that the Jews taxed Jesus first with making himself "*Christ, a King*," obviously intending thereby, as Luke xxiii. they hoped it would be received, an offence against the 2. John xviii. 33; xix. 3. Roman government. This failing, they accused him of "*making himself the Son of God*," a crime against John xix. 7. *their own law*, and none against that of the Romans. Accordingly, Pilate dealt with it as a *fresh* charge, subjecting him pp. 95, 96. to a new and different examination. When he also refused to condemn him on this ground, they reverted to their first count, *adding considerations which made him apprehensive for his own safety*; telling him, that for Christ to "*make himself* John xix. 12. *a king*" was an offence against Cæsar; and that if he "*let him go*," he "*was not Cæsar's friend*." Under so jealous a prince as Tiberius, these were words not to be treated with indifference by a selfish man. Wherefore Pilate gave way, taking care to draw forth a renewal of the charge, and John xix. 13—15. an expression of their allegiance to Cæsar; and moreover, to describe the offence on the cross after the language of the *first* and the *last* accusations, not of the *intermediate* one; John xix. 19. "*Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews*."

Besides, Jesus knew that he was now to be put to death, and had no wish or thought to escape. Supposing, then, the two titles to mean precisely the *same thing*, it could not be worthy his consideration, under which of them he should be charged, seeing the issue was sure. But being, as they are, of a widely *different* signification, he had ground for distinction and preference. It was to the *Jews* he had regard, and not

to *Pilate*, in his confession. And he confessed to that character, the assumption of which made his crime in *their* sight, and is the ground of hope in *ours*. He chose to die, for "*making himself God*."

NOTE L. (p. 101.)

It is not disputed, that these titles, "Messiah," (or "Christ") and "Son of God," came, in our Saviour's time, to be *both* employed indifferently of *him*. What we contend is, that they came to be so employed by reason of *his assumption of the latter*, as well as the former; and consequently after a sense to be learned *from him*, and from the nature of the Messiah as taught in the Old Testament; and not through the *previous* popular use of the latter title by the *Jews*, and after a sense to be gathered from the *prevailing opinions of that people*.

But while it is conceded that these titles came to stand for the same *person*, viz. Jesus, it is by no means allowed that they ever stood for the same *notion*; a distinction which it is very necessary to bear in mind. They were adopted by him, not as *identical*, or *synonymous*; but as signs of two *distinct* relations in him.

God *the Father* is called by sundry names; but each expresses a *separate property or relation* in him. So "Jesus," "Messiah," "Son of God," "Son of man," "Son of David," "that Prophet," "great High Priest," "King of Israel," &c., are all used to designate our Lord; not in a vain pomp of unmeaning variety, but as presenting him in so many divers aspects; each affording matter for faith, and for corresponding sentiments¹.

¹ Those of our divines who have thought that these names were current with the Jews, at the time of our Saviour's advent, as representing equally the Messiah; have also held, that this people looked for a Messiah in the *divine nature*, of which the title of "Son of God" was the sign, while that of the "Messiah" represented his appointed *office*. They considered that the Jews gathered this knowledge, as to the divine nature of the Messiah, from Ps. ii.

Among these divines are Tillotson, Patrick, Pearson, Horsley, and Allix. (See note B.)

vi. 172, 179. Mr Locke, when supporting, by the authority of Tillotson and Patrick, his

own

The evangelist speaks of him, after his ascension, both as the "Lamb," and as the "Word;" by the one title, pointing to him as our Atonement; and by the other, as the "Lord our Maker:" thus representing to us that great "mystery of godliness," which the scoffing infidel objects to us in derision, but of which we "boast all the day long;" viz. that our *victim* is also our *God*.

The titles in question are respectively of a meaning akin to these. "*Christ*," denotes the *office* which our Lord undertook for us; "*Son of God*," his *original nature*.

Were these titles absolutely of the same signification, both expressing the mere *official* character of our Lord, it would be unmeaning tautology to use them together. "Thou art Christ, the Son of God," would be equivalent to, "Thou art Messiah, Messiah." Still more unreasonable would it be to employ one as the *predicate* of the other; as where it is said, "Paul preached, that *Christ is the Son of God*." This would be what is called an *identical proposition*, that Messiah is Messiah. *Jesus* was the *personal* name of him, about whom it was disputed "whether he was *the Christ*," or no. The affirmative would be expressed by saying, "Jesus is the Christ." Accordingly, when it is related of Paul that he taught this doctrine, such is the language employed. Having proved to the Jews, that the circumstances foretold of the Messiah were fulfilled in Jesus, he stated his conclusion to them in these words; "This *Jesus*, whom I preach unto you, is *Christ*."

Had the "*Son of God*" meant precisely the same thing as "*Christ*," he might have properly said, "This Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is the *Son of God*:" but neither of these titles could be substituted in the place of "*Jesus*;" because neither stood for that Son of Mary, concerning whom it was the apostle's aim to establish, that he was

Rev. v. 9;
xix. 13.

John i. 29;
i. 3.
Gibbon.

Matt. xvi.

16.

Mark i. 1.

Luke iv. 41.

John vi. 69;
xx. 31.

Acts ix. 20;
comp. viii.
37.

Acts xvii. 3.

own view of the already current application of both titles, indifferently, to the Messiah, omits to state, in *what sense* they supposed the Jews to have understood them, and in *what light* to have looked for a Messiah. This is hardly candid. Their authority, if their opinions had been fully given, would have been directly at variance with his theory, that the Jews expected only a *human* Messiah, and applied both titles to Christ, in *this* sense.

the personage foretold by the prophets. Had Paul so summed up his argument, saying, "Christ is the Son of God;" or "the Son of God is Christ;" the Jews would have replied (on the supposition that both titles meant the same thing, and were so understood by them); "What is that to the question at issue? we know that he who is to come, is both 'Christ' and the 'Son of God:' what we deny is, that *Jesus*, whom you preach, is the person so promised."

Acts ix. 20. When St Paul elsewhere *does* say, that "Christ is the Son of God;" that which would be an *identical proposition* conveying no instruction, if the titles meant the *same thing*, is an open proclamation of that great truth of which he had just had eye-witness; viz. that he who was the Messiah was also the "Son of God," in all the glory of his Father's nature.

This reasoning is borne out by the manner of employing the analogous title of "Son of David," asserting the *human* origin of the Messiah. When it is intended by it to acknowledge our Lord for the *Messiah*, the form is; "Jesus, thou Son of David;" and nowhere, "*Christ*, thou Son of David." When there is question as to the *predicted lineage of the Messiah*, the truth respecting it is expressed by saying, "*Christ* is the Son of David;" "cometh of the seed of David." So, "Christ is the Son of God," is employed to represent that the Messiah is strictly the "Son of the Blessed," in the fulness of the same nature; and that he who is proved to be the Messiah, must also be God.

Mr Locke, indeed, would evade these conclusions, by supposing that "*Christ*" had already become so acknowledged and familiar a title of the Son of Mary, as to be popularly used instead of his *personal* name, Jesus, regard being no longer had to its *official* sense. But how could this be, while the very question generally at issue was, *whether or no Jesus was the Christ?* We must not forget that the Jews were in a very different state of mind, on this subject, from that in which we read the Gospel now-a-days.

The testimony of Origen, who had good opportunity of knowing the truth, is alone sufficient to disprove Mr Locke's proposition, that these titles were synonymous in the use of

Luke xviii.
38. Mark x.
47. Matt. xii.
23; ix. 27.

Matt. xxii.
42. John
vii. 42.

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the Jews generally, as applicable to their Messiah. He distinctly denies that this people, in our Saviour's time, ever applied the title of "Son of God," to their *expected Messiah*; in agreement with the conclusion we have seen reason to come to, from the absence of a *single example* of such use of it in the Gospel. See for Origen, Bull, J. E. C. c. i. n. 9; and Wilson, pp. 15, 72, 73.

Thus far as to the question of *fact*.

But could it be made out, as Mr Locke would have it, that these titles were *previously* current among the Jews, as *equivalent*, and in the sense he would represent, of the object of their hope as *they looked for him, i.e.* in the character of a mere *human* deliverer; it would not afford any good ground for believing such to be the *true purport* of the title of "Son of God." The opinions of the Jews are no more a guide to the *real Scriptural* meaning of *this* character, than they are to that of the "*Messiah*," which Mr Locke admits that people to have *grossly misunderstood*. We do not take up with their carnal notions of the *kind of deliverance* Christ came to accomplish. Whatever they might think as to the meaning of the title of "Son of God," derived by them (if known at all) from Scripture, we must seek our instruction on this point, as we do on the other, from Scripture itself.

Nor does Mr Locke pretend otherwise. In the work referred to, he does not profess to enquire into the *real nature* of Christ, and to rest his decision upon the views of the Jews; but only to ascertain *what notions they attached* to the title of "Son of God:" the proposition he would establish being, that, if it was thought enough by our Lord in order to the reception of them as his disciples, that they owned him for the "Son of God," and they understood by this title, when so owning him under it, nothing more than a *human Messiah*; then, they who *now* own him for a *human Messiah*, may, upon the authority of his example, be admitted by baptism to the profession and privileges of the gospel.

But were Mr Locke's premises true (which they are, we trust, shewn *not* to be), they *would not justify his conclusion*. For it would rest upon this assumption; that to

confess Jesus for the Messiah, in the sense in which the *Jews* so owned him *during his ministry*, suffices to the same end, of effectual reception as his disciples, *for us, now*; that is to say, that if we acknowledge him for a *temporal* deliverer promised to the *Jewish nation exclusively*, without any *spiritual* mission to *them*, or *any mission at all* to the Gentiles, it will entitle us to blessings which we do not believe he *came to bring*, or *had to bestow*. Such is the faith which now suffices to justification, if Mr Locke's conclusion holds good. For such was the notion entertained by the Jews of their promised "Messiah," and the sense in which they *at first* owned him in that character, who did own him as such at all.

See Horsley,
p. 239.

The real truth is, that though simply to own him for the "Messiah" and for the "Son of God," was all that was required by Jesus in order to baptism as his disciples, during his own ministry, and this with a very imperfect knowledge of what was intended by *either* title; it was regarded by him as sufficient, only because *no more had, as yet, been clearly taught*. Such faith was proportioned to their knowledge. They who so owned him, owned him for a "teacher come from God," and avowed, and entertained a willingness to believe the whole truth which he should *subsequently reveal*. And in proportion as more was clearly taught and understood concerning him, the *meaning* of this confession of him, both as the "Messiah" and as the "Son of God," was *enlarged*, though the form of words remained the same. The titles, as in the mouths of disciples, varied in purport almost from day to day. The confession of Nathanael was nearly in the same terms as that of Paul, but not with equal intelligence, or like extent and accuracy of faith. The proclamation of the Baptist, "Behold the *Lamb* of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," though in strict agreement with the prophetic notices of the aim of the Messiah's mission, was, during our Lord's ministry, no part of the notion of that character, even among his disciples. It is expressly stated by St Luke, that just before his death, when he announced that coming event and his resurrection following, they "*understood none of these things*." It was at a *late* period, and after an approved confession of him as "the Christ" and as "the Son of God,"

John i. 49.
Acts ix. 20,
22.

John i. 29.
Isai. liii. 4—
8.

See Locke,
vi. 66, 67.

Luke xviii.
34.

that Peter repelled the intimation of his approaching end, *as inconsistent with the view he still entertained as to the nature of his kingdom*, and drew forth a rebuke of his carnal notions. And Christ's crucifixion accomplished extinguished for awhile the faith and hopes of *all* his disciples, that it was "he who should redeem Israel." His "making his soul an offering for sin" and "becoming obedient to death, even the death of the cross," were as yet no part of the settled creed of his chosen and best instructed followers. But after his ascension, when he had explained the nature of his kingdom and blessings, and proved them to be in accordance with what "Moses and all the prophets had spoken" concerning him, and had "opened their understandings that they might understand the Scriptures," and had "sent the promise of his Father upon them"—that Comforter which should "teach them all things, and bring all things to their remembrance whatsoever he had said unto them"—*then* the confession of Christ, which they required from their converts, after ample instruction, was, the confession of "Christ crucified," and "*raised from the dead.*" So in measure as he explained in what lofty sense he claimed to be the "Son of God," by intimating his pre-existence in heaven, "many of his disciples murmured," and "walked no more with him;" while others, "blessed in that they were not offended in him," believed and regarded him answerably to this further knowledge. And after he was "declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead," and seen to "ascend up where he was before;" he was acknowledged and worshipped in the fulness of the divine majesty, by all who were received unto his baptism, agreeably to his own last injunction recorded in my text.

Thus the confession of faith in Jesus, as the "Messiah" and as the "Son of God," kept pace, in its signification, with the knowledge revealed of him. It always included the reception of him in the *full* character in which he had been *previously preached*; and, during his own ministry, was accompanied by a desire to learn, and a willingness to receive the whole truth, which he should promulgate concerning himself. Hence, what was originally understood

Matt. xvi.
21—23.

Luke xxiv.
21.
Isai. liii. 10.
Phil. ii. 8.

Luke xxiv.
25—49.

John xiv. 26.

1 Cor. ii. 2.
Rom. x. 9.

John vi. 41,
66.
Luke vii. 23.

John vi. 67,
69.

Rom. i. 4.

John vi. 62.

by these titles, by those who *first* owned our Lord under them, can be no rule for *our* profession of faith in him, who have the full light of the Gospel accessible to us; even could it be shewn, that those people regarded them as equivalent, in the low sense, of a *human* Messiah.

I have entered thus fully upon the consideration of Mr Locke's view respecting the meaning and use of these titles, because it is much relied upon by *Unitarians*; and because Mr Locke himself seems to intimate, that in the controversy which he brought upon himself by the work alluded to, no attempt was made to prove his position erroneous; which I hope to have succeeded in doing¹.

I have stated, on Mr Locke's own authority, that his object, in seeking to prove that the Jews in our Lord's time understood these titles of "Messiah" and "Son of God," in the same sense of a temporal deliverer, in a *merely human* nature, was only, to establish that such a creed is sufficient *now*, for a *first* admission to the privileges of the Gospel. He made no attempt to shew that the *real Scriptural* meaning of these titles, and the *true nature* of Christ, were no other and higher. The Socinians^a, however, and the Unitarians^b, contend for this same popular use of these titles among the Jews of our Saviour's time, in the lower sense, as a proof of the truth of their doctrine, that Christ *was in fact* no more than a *human* teacher of divine truth. And as Mr Locke concurs in their premises, they do not scruple to assert his agreement in their conclusion.

^a Rees's
Rac. Cat.
135.
^b Lardner,
x. 390;
xi. 98.

As this was also the hasty impression of some divines, and others of our Church, on the first publication of his "Reasonableness of Christianity;" and, as it must be confessed, his true object therein was not made sufficiently clear; I cannot think it altogether superfluous, to present here the testimony which he subsequently gave as to his real opinions, and as to the object of his work. Thus, whatever weight is attached to his name (and with many it will not be a light one) will be placed in the right scale.

¹ I have not been able to obtain a sight of his opponent's (Dr Edwards) pamphlets, none of them being found in the library of the University, which seems to want several principal works, not only in this, but in the Arian controversy.

Channing, i.
579; see also
Bishop Bur-
gess's Tracts,
p. 23.

It is stated, in the Life of Mr Locke, that he is thought ^{p. xxxiv.} to have written the above work, "in order to promote the scheme which King William III. had much at heart, of a comprehension with the Dissenters." He tells us himself, ^{B. vi. 187.} that the controversy among the Dissenters, on the subject of justification, led him to enquire "what faith that was that justified," and so, eventually, to the views which he has there put forth. And he distinctly and repeatedly states, in his two "Vindications" of it, that "he chiefly ^{pp. 164, 188, 263, 265.} designed the book for those not fully satisfied of the reasonableness of Christianity," that is, "for *Deists*;" and that, on *this* account, he *kept back the doctrines to which they feel* ^{164, 5, 375.} *most repugnance*, and presented that single one, of Christ's being the "Messiah," in which all must agree; and which, according to his view (erroneous as, I trust, it has been shewn), our Saviour and his apostles alone required upon ^{235.} the first admission of converts, and the belief of which he hence regards as, at first, sufficient to justification.

He says elsewhere, that he neither meant to assert that, coming to this belief, a Christian might *safely stop here*, nor expected they would; for that this is only the *first step* to Christianity. His reliance, as he himself represents it, was this: "Convince but men of the mission of Jesus Christ; ^{164, 5.} make them but see the truth, simplicity, and reasonableness, of what he himself taught, and required to be believed by his followers; and you need not doubt, but being once fully persuaded of his doctrine, and the advantages which all Christians agree are received by him, such converts will not lay by the Scriptures; but by a constant reading and study of them get all the light they can from this divine revelation, and nourish themselves up in the words of faith and of good doctrine." He declares his belief in the *perfect* ^{154, 156.} *inspiration of the whole of Scripture*; and of the consequent *strict necessity of studying and believing every doctrine contained* ^{234.} *in it*: for that "to acknowledge any proposition to be of ^{156.} divine revelation and authority, and yet to deny or disbelieve it, is to offend against this fundamental article and ground of faith, that God is true." He affirms expressly, that in propounding one fundamental article, he is merely declaring what is necessary in order to *become* a Christian; a ^{235.}

very different thing from the duty of him who *is so*: that “all divine revelation requires the obedience of faith:” and that every one is to “receive *all parts of it* with a docility and disposition prepared to assent to all truths coming from God, and submit his mind to whatever shall appear to him to bear that character.”

110, 111,
235.

105.

115.

104.

He further represents, that a mere *belief* is insufficient, without corresponding *sentiments* and *conduct*—a “faith working by love;” that a lively repentance and sorrow for sin, followed by forsaking it; the adoption of Christ as our *King*, to live in a sincere endeavour to comply with the whole of his pure law, *stricter than any known before*; and to bring our whole conduct and character and dispositions to an agreement with it, are indispensable accompaniments of a justifying faith; and moreover, to be baptized in token thereof.

359.

Such being the avowed aim and principles of Mr Locke’s work, it is by no means fair to represent him as rejecting those articles of our creed which he merely *withholds*, as unsuitable to his immediate purpose. If he thought that a distinction is to be drawn between the faith first required of converts, and that of established disciples; and that he could shew, from Scripture, the *preliminary* creed to be no larger than that for which he contends, of believing Jesus to be the promised Messiah, in a mere *human nature*; however we may think him in error, we are not justified in assuming that *he himself believed no more*. Such, however, was the consequence of his work. He was immediately hailed by Unitarians as their disciple, and charged with Socinianism by members of our Church¹. But he distinctly and repeatedly denies the justice of these inferences. He expressly disclaims having written a word savouring of these doctrines, and challenges the production of any such. He points out many expressions in his book directly at variance

¹ Dr Edwards was the person with whom he had a correspondence, on account of this charge. Bishop Stillington’s controversies with him were on other points. But the latter seems to allude to him, and to this work, where he says: “The Socinians profess themselves Christians, and I hope are so; especially if but *one article of faith* be required to make men so.” Works, 111. 427.

with them ; such as intimate his belief in the doctrine of Christ's death being a *satisfaction* for our sins ; in the necessity of a *Saviour*, and of the aid of the *Holy Spirit* to enlighten us. He declares, that the view with which he wrote was not such as to deserve opposition from any one in communion with the *Church of England*, and that he had not pronounced " a tittle of the faith he was baptized into : " and he calls upon his opponent to shew a word of his which intimates "*that Christ is not more than man.*" He justifies his omission to refer to texts which exhibit the doctrine of a Trinity (as Matth. xxviii. 19 ; John i. 1), by his persuasion, that this doctrine was not regarded by Christ as essential to the faith preparatory to baptism ; and hence, not belonging to the immediate aim of his work, that it would have been a needless impediment to its success.

Mr Locke, after all this testimony to the true scope of his book, and to his real opinions, is to be acquitted of discrediting the doctrines which he omits, and of any wish to under-rate the evidence of Scripture to them. But it must be owned that he did not explain himself sufficiently, in the first instance. A more open avowal, however, would have conflicted with his end, of converting the deists through the "reasonableness" of the creed which he proposed, as alone necessary in order to their becoming Christians. He seems to have met with the usual fate attending such schemes of concession. He led the deists to boast, that all ground above that to which he invited them, was abandoned by him as untenable, while they made no advance towards it.

This view of Mr Locke's real opinions is fully borne out by his Commentary on the Epistles of St Paul.

NOTE M. (p. 104.)

It may be well to go through with them in order. 1. John the Baptist. He derived his knowledge of

Jesus, in the character of "Son of God," by a voice from heaven at his baptism, and by inspiration of the Holy Ghost.

See Wilson,
ch. iv.

Matt. iii. 17.
John i. 32—
34.

2. Nathanael. He made his confession of Jesus in this character, as well as that of the Messiah, two days after the proclamation from heaven. He probably was present on the occasion, and also knew the "record that John bare of him." For there is every reason to suppose him to have been a disciple of John, by his readiness to follow Jesus whom John had preached, and for whom it had been his occupation to "prepare the way."

John i. 34.

3. Peter. He was a chosen disciple of Jesus, and well knew him to have pointedly assumed this character. And he was, moreover, specially enlightened respecting it from heaven, as Jesus himself declared.

Matt. xvi.
16, 17.

4. Martha. She was an early disciple, and accustomed to this his doctrine concerning himself.

5. The Sanhedrim. They knew of his pretension from many who had often heard it, and been offended at it. Some of them had in all likelihood been among his auditory on those occasions: for the attempt to put him to death was in conformity with the law, and rather implies the presence of persons in authority.

6. The Centurion. He seems to have been an officer of that portion of the Roman army charged to protect the administration of justice. He had doubtless been present at the trial, and heard the words of the accusation under which Jesus was condemned. Awed by the supernatural events which took place at his death, he regarded them as an evidence of the truth of his pretensions. If, as Mr Locke supposes, and as it is natural should be the case, he was a *heathen*, he could not mean, by calling him the "Son of God," to confess that he had been the "*King of Israel*;" the contrary to which, in the sense *he* attached to this character, he knew for fact. But being, as a heathen, familiar with the notion of "gods coming down in the likeness of men," he might naturally regard this commotion of the elements as an exercise of his power, and a testimony that he truly was, after his (the Centurion's) views, a "Son of God"—a *divine Being*, as he had understood him to avow; and might intend to confess him for such. Thus his words are a testimony to what he understood to be the nature of Jesus's claim, and of the offence for which he was condemned.

Vol. vi. 370,
1.

See Acts
xiv. 11;
xxviii. 6.

Thus not one of Mr Locke's chosen witnesses serves as an example of any previous application of the title of *Son of God* by the Jews, to their *Messiah*.

There is another instance of the confession of *Jesus* by this title—that of the *unclean Spirits*. Mr Locke does not suppose *them* to have derived their notions from the Jews. I will give his speculation concerning their use of this title, in his own words: it is curious. “In both these places, which relate to different times and different occasions, the devils declare Jesus to be the Son of God. It is certain, whatever they meant by it, they used a phrase of known signification in that country: and what may we reasonably think they designed to make known to the people by it? Can we imagine these unclean Spirits were promoters of the Gospel, and had a mind to acknowledge and publish to the people the deity of our Saviour, which the unmasker^a would have to be the signification of the *Son of God*? Who can entertain such a thought? No, they were no friends to our Saviour, and therefore *desired to spread a belief* of him that *he was the Messiah*; that so he might, by the envy of the Scribes and Pharisees, be *disturbed in his ministry, and be cut off before he had completed it.*”

Matt. viii.
29.
Luke iv. 41;
viii. 28.
Mark iii. 11.

Vol. vi. 367.

^a Dr Edwards, his
opponent.

But if this were their aim, why did they not simply call him *the Messiah*, which name, in two of the instances above referred to (one of which is of those cited by Mr Locke), is wholly omitted. Mr Locke allows that this was the title which afforded the *best* handle for accusing him; and says, that on *this* account our Saviour *less freely owned himself by it*, than by that of “the Son of God.” Why, then, did the unclean Spirits, if they were bent on malice, not use the likeliest means?

vi. 47, 76, 77.

But who, without the prejudice of a favourite hypothesis, can for a moment imagine them to have been thinking of the people, and of harming Jesus, and not occupied with *their own jeopardy*? Did Mr Locke suppose these *evil* Spirits independent of the *One Good*, and at liberty to carry out their own aims, at this time? Was not he who “commanded them, and they came out,” competent to direct in what manner they should comport themselves, and acknowledge him? Did they not know themselves to be subject

Luke iv. 36;
comp. Matt.
xv. 41; viii.
29, 31.
Luke viii.
28—31.

to him? Would they be thinking of destroying him, when they were trembling for themselves? when they were dreading his power, lest he should "torment them before the time," and beseeching of him some kind and measure of leniency? In such a conjuncture, was it as an expression of malice, or of submissive reverence, that they hailed him, "Thou Son of God most high?"

So difficult is it, even for so acute and judicious a person as Mr Locke, to avoid falling into inconsistencies, when seeking to make out a theory, not originally espoused for its manifest truth, but because falling in with a favourite scheme!

NOTE N. (p. 108.)

Why does Christ make this transition from the title of John xvi. 2. "God," in the verse immediately preceding, to that of "*Father*," but to mark that the ignorance imputed has reference to the peculiar relation of "*Father*," in connexion with *himself*, and not to his character of *God*, in respect to *mankind*.

It is worthy of remark, that whenever Jesus alludes to the ignorance of his disciples touching God or himself, it is always under this relation of *Father* and *Son*. He never tells them they are ignorant of God, as *God*, or of himself, as *Christ*. On the contrary, he admits their belief in both, as such; and at the same time asserts their ignorance of both, under the characters of "*Father*" and "*Son*." John xiv. 1; x. 14; xvii. 8, 25. John xiv. 7.

Thus in Luke x. 22, he intimates the universal ignorance both of God and of himself, but under the relation of "*Father*" and "*Son*," in the true identity of nature. He neither means to say that no one knew God *as such*, or that no one knew *himself* as the "*Messiah*;" for many thus knew both, and, in consequence, devoted themselves to him.

In this place, Jesus adds with respect to the Father, Luke x. 22. "No one knows who the Father is but the Son, and he to whom *the Son shall reveal him*;" just as he elsewhere asserts of the knowledge of himself, that none could attain to it but by revelation *from the Father*. The *same* mystery is declared to attach to *both*, and in this relation. As God, and his *promised Messenger*, there was no mystery, Matt. xvi. 17. John i. 12, 13.

to those whom he was addressing ; this *official* relation was confessed. What remained to be revealed was, their entire *community of nature*. (See Sermon II. note C.)

NOTE O. (p. 114.)

Simon Magus, though sowing the seeds of many heresies, was himself rather an impostor than a heretic.

See Acts
viii. 9—21.

But his pretensions also bear witness to the truth. He gave himself out for the Supreme God, who had appeared in Samaria as the Father, in Judæa as the Son, and in other nations as the Holy Ghost. It is clear that he grounded his personal pretensions on what he knew to be the received faith of Christians, perverting the truth only so far as to suit his own ends. Hence it appears, that the equal divinity of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, was already the established belief ; *i. e.* in the very time of the apostles, from whom he gathered his knowledge.

For an account of him, see Berriman, Sermon I. ; Pearson, vol. II. 122 ; Wilson, pp. 229—232 ; Bull, Pr. et Ap. Tr. c. II. ; Bishop of Lincoln's Justin Martyr, p. 126, and his Tertullian, p. 578 (2nd Ed.)

NOTE P. (p. 118.)

The following extract from Waterland is so excellent as a summary of the main portion of the arguments which have been brought forward, that I make no scruple to present it at length.

“ To sum up the force of the general argument. If the premises stand, the conclusion makes itself. Every *single* attribute that hath been mentioned ; every *single* title, almost, justifies the inference, that Christ is no *creature*, but truly and strictly God ; *all together* make so full, so clear, and irrefragable a demonstration of it, that one might justly wonder how any, who retain the least regard or reverence towards the sacred Writ, can make any serious doubt of it. It cannot be shewn that any one of these *names, titles, attributes*,

and *essential properties* of God, was ever given, in this manner, and with those circumstances, to any *creature*. If one or two of them (as the name of *God*, for instance) might be *equivocal*, yet the rest are not so : and the *manner* and *circumstances*, wherewith they are ascribed to Christ, sufficiently determine the sense of them. If *titles* alone are not of weight sufficient, *attributes* come in to strengthen and confirm them ; and if any scruples remain still, *creation* and *adoration* understood of, and attributed to Christ, render the proof still more irrefragable. The strength and number of the evidences concurring to establish Christ's *divinity*, when fewer and less considerable might have been sufficient, is very wonderful ; as if Divine Wisdom had purposely so ordered it, foreseeing what opposition would be made to it. Were it possible, by any quirk or subtlety, to elude every *single* evidence, yet the joint force of all together would be very considerable ; because it is hardly to be imagined that, in an affair of this moment, God would ever have suffered so many plausible appearances, and specious presumptions, of a thing that is not, to stand in Scripture, for the *deception*, even of *wise*, and *good*, and *conscientious* men. The *Jewish Church* were trained up to a sense of the *true God*, by those *very characters* which are applied to *Christ*. Upon those they formed their *idea* of the *divine Being*, and would have thought it *blasphemy* to have ascribed the same, though by way of *figure* only (in so *serious* a concern), to any creature. And not they only, but all mankind must allow, that none more expressive and significant characters of *God* can be devised, than several of those are which are applied to *Christ*. If we are mistaken in this matter, it is a mistake which the Christian world, by plain force of Scripture, has, in a manner, inevitably been led into. He must be a very weak man who can imagine, that the doctrine of the Trinity could ever have come in, or could have subsisted half a century, were it not for the plain and irresistible reasons for it, appearing in *holy Scripture*. How the matter now stands, all the Christian world over (except a few reclaimants), is very well known. If we

Now 1500.

run up fourteen hundred years higher, or thereabout, we find the body of the bishops and clergy summoned from all parts to debate *this very question*, determining at length as

we have done, and as much *deceived* (if we are deceived) as we are at this day. If we look sixty years higher, and may judge of the principles of the Church at that time, from those of the two celebrated bishops of Alexandria and Rome, with their clergy: we still find them lying under the same fatal *deception* that prevails now. Go up a hundred years higher, to the middle of the second century; still, all the way as we pass, we meet with plain marks and characters of the same *delusion* (if it be any) overspreading the Church of Christ, at a time when *miracles* were not ceased, nor *revelations* uncommon. In short, when we have carried our searches up to the very *apostolic* age, we still observe manifest footsteps of the same *error* (if it be one) prevailing: nor can we find so much as one man of any considerable repute among Christians, whom we can certainly prove to have been free from it. Surely God has forsaken his *heritage*, and given up his Church to *strong delusions* (that Church against which the *gates of hell* shall *never prevail*), if we have been mistaken in these things. It appears however from hence, how powerful and forcible the Scripture evidences of Christ's divinity have ever been upon the minds of men: not the illiterate, unthinking, or injudicious; but the wisest, the most considerate, the brightest ornaments, and the most eminent lights of the Christian Church." Works, vol. II. 166—168.

NOTES TO SERMON IV.

NOTE A. (p. 121.)

DR WATERLAND observes with respect to the Arian mode of arguing this question; "This controversy, managed upon the foot of mere reason, terminates at length in that single question, *whether the essence of God be above comprehension or no.*" They who would object to the doctrine of the Trinity from the nature and reason of the thing, must proceed on the supposition, that they have a competent knowledge of the divine essence. Accordingly, some of the ancient Arians, and modern Unitarians, have not hesitated to declare this to be within the grasp of their understandings.

Vol. I. 218.

Ibid. also IV. 45.

Waterland observes again: "It is to me an instance of the ill effects of vain philosophy, and shews how the "disputer of this world" may get the better of the Christian, when men appear so much afraid of an *imaginary* error in *metaphysics*; and, to avoid it, run into a *real* one against *Scripture* and *antiquity.*"

Vol. I. 239.

Dr Whitby is an eminent example in point. After shewing the truth of the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity with great clearness and strength of reasoning, grounded on an intimate knowledge of *Scripture*, and the opinions of the *primitive fathers* of the Church, he, in his old age, fell away to the opinions of the Arians, in reliance chiefly on the *metaphysical reasoning* of Dr S. Clarke. I refer for his former opinions (independently of his Commentary) to the Tract so often referred to, "*De vera Christi Deitate*;" and for his latter notions, to his "*Last Thoughts*;" where his chief stress is laid on discussions concerning "numerical and specific essence," and the true force of the terms "*Person* and *Being*," wherein he seems to assume the very point at issue.

NOTE B. (p. 121.)

Hear however the words of Smalcus, a distinguished Socinian, one of the authors of their celebrated Creed, the Racovian Catechism¹—and their just rebuke, as quoted by Whitby, Tract, p. 115.

En verba Smalcii genium horum hominum heu nimium prudentia, justumque doctissimi Placæi de iis ἐπικρίσιν, sive censuram. “Credimus, inquit, etiamsi non semel atque iterum, sed satis crebrò et apertissimè extaret, Deum esse hominem factum, multo satius esse, quia hæc res sit absurda, et sanæ rationi plane contraria et in Deum blasphema, modum aliquem dicendi *comminisci* quo ista de Deo dici possint, quam ista simpliciter, ita ut verba sonant, intelligere.”

Then the rebuke of Placæus:

“Hocceine est fidem suam ad Scripturarum normam exigere; ac non potius apertè profiteri, se ex eorum numero esse, qui, ut loquitur Apostolus Petrus, στρεβλοῦσι τὰς 2 Pet. iii. 16. γράφας, et ad suas præjudicatas opiniones intorquent?”

NOTE C. (p. 122.)

The Ebionites (the earliest ancient Unitarians) rejected all the Gospels but that of St Matthew, and mutilated even that; and treated alike St Peter and St Paul. See Bull, J. E. C. c. vii. n. 9; and Appendix, n. 9; also Wilson, ch. xiv.

The modern Unitarians adopt a similar course. They either reject portions of Scripture, or wrest its meaning, or deny its inspiration, which is a denial of it as a revelation. See Stillingfleet, Disc. on the Trin. ch. iii. viii.; Wilson, ch. xiv.; Wardlaw, note H.

See also Rees's Racov. Cat. sect. iv. near the beginning, in a note on the title of “Son of God;” where it is obvious, that the Unitarians reject the opening chapters of St Matthew's and St Luke's gospels, on account of the history of our Lord's miraculous conception, which they choose to disbelieve.

¹ His name does not appear on the title-page: but he was one of those entrusted to draw it up, after the death of Faustus Socinus. See Rees's Transl. Introd. p. 78.

Mr Wilson justly reasons, that the very fact, that the ancient Unitarians, like the modern, were obliged to reject a portion of the Scriptures acknowledged by the whole Church, shews that they, in common with the Church, saw in them the doctrines which they rejected.

Mr Hey says of the modern professors of these tenets :

“To set aside whole books of Scripture (as the ancient and modern Unitarians) seems something more than to *interpret*. Yet if we set aside the *genuine sense*, we may as well set aside the *words* too : for deprived of their right sense, words must either be useless, or mislead.”

“But we have a new way of lessening the force of Scriptures which do not favour us (he is alluding to Dr Priestley). Instead of treating books as *spurious*, we diminish the *degree of inspiration*. A sacred writer, we say, might be *biased by his prejudices* ; he might be *mistaken*. We must not in *all* cases trust too implicitly,” &c.

“Surely when our adversaries go these lengths, they do not perceive that they are in reality *confirming* those doctrines, which they confess themselves unable to overthrow, without measures which take away the whole matter in dispute. All that we affirm is, that, *supposing* the Scriptures, as we have them, to be *divinely inspired*, so that everything in them is *truth*, such and such doctrines are contained in them :—the moment that our adversaries change any part of this supposition, there is no longer any question between us.” Lect. B. iv. Art. i. sect. 16. See also Mosheim, cent. xvi. pt. ii. ch. iv. § 15.

Stillingfleet observes of their objections to our canon of Scripture : “It is plain that they have no mind to be tried by the Scriptures. For these exceptions are such, as a malefactor would make to a jury he is afraid to be condemned by.” Disc. on the Trin. ch. i.

NOTE D. (p. 127.)

See Note L. Serm i. ; Allix, ch. viii. ix. x. ; Ridley's Second Moyer's Lect. ; Stillingfleet, vol. iii. 494.

Allix says, the ancient Jews (besides the passages quoted)

applied Ps. xxxiii. 6, to the "Word" or Son of God and to the Holy Spirit: and to the Holy Spirit 2 Sam. xxiii. 2, 3; Isai. xi. 2; lix. 19, 21; lxi. 1. comp. Luke iv. 18.

He refers also to many passages in the Apocrypha, to shew that they thus understood the doctrines of the inspired writings: as Judith xvi. 13, 14; Wisdom ix. 17; i. 7. &c.

Dr Ridley understands Ps. xxxiii. 6; Job xxvi. 13; and xxxiii. 4; of the Holy Spirit (Moyer's Lect. p. 14). Pearson relies upon the former passage of Job (p. 373). See also Dr Pye Smith's Sermon on the "Personality and Divinity of the Holy Spirit."

NOTE E. (p. 129.)

Dr S. Clarke, Script. Doctr. No. 1.

He says: "Such is the nature of the Greek and Latin languages, that by no other word (neither by *πρόσωπον*, nor by *ὑπόστασις*, nor by any other word whatsoever) can they so properly express that which we mean by the English word *person*, as by the masculine adjective alone. Upon which account the words of our Saviour (John xvi. 13): *When he (ἐκεῖνος, τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας—that person), the Spirit of truth is come*, are generally allowed to be a good proof of the personality of the Holy Ghost."

It is again one of his Propositions, grounded on a review of all the texts bearing on this subject, that "The Holy Spirit of God does not in Scripture generally signify a mere *power*, or *operation* of the Father, but a *real Person*." Part II. sect. xxii.

See the opinion entertained of Dr S. Clarke, by the eminent Unitarian writer, Dr Channing, Works, I. 580.

NOTE F. (p. 134.)

Schleusner in his Lexicon (v. *πνεῦμα*), says; "The most remarkable passage in the New Testament in which *πνεῦμα ἄγιον* is expressive of a *person*, and which alone is sufficient to prove that the Holy Ghost is different from the Father

and the Son, *in the same manner* as they differ from each other, is in Matt. xxviii. 19; where the apostles are commanded to baptize in the name of the Holy Spirit, as well as of the Father and the Son."

NOTE G. (p. 144.)

Such was the opinion of the primitive Fathers. Dr Whitby says, in his Tract, p. 18:—

Primo. Per Septem Spiritus, omnes Veteres Spiritum Sanctum intelligunt, de quo Ecclesia canit, quod sit *munere Septiformis*, et qui juxta Esaiam est; "Πνεῦμα σοφίας καὶ συνέσεως, βουλῆς καὶ ἰσχυρός, γνώσεως καὶ εὐσεβείας, καὶ φόβου Κυρίου; *Spiritus sapientiæ et scientiæ, consilii et fortitudinis, cognitionis et pietatis, et timoris Domini.* "Sacri Prophetæ unum et eundem Spiritum in septem Spiritus partiuntur," inquit Justinus. "Spiritus Sanctus in Scripturis septenario numero præcipuè commendatur, sive apud Esaiam, sive in Apocalypsi," inquit Augustinus. Atque hoc ex eo probant, quod nunquam Christianorum aliquis precatur quicquam accipere à *Deo et ab Angelis.*

Secundo. Ii a quibus gratiam hic et pacem Joannes flagitat, non tantum Deo Christoque conjunguntur, sed etiam *medio inter utrumque loco* collocantur; atque ab iis, nulla imparitatis nota præmissa, quæ *Deo soli* debentur, Joannes postulat; unde id conjectari liceat, non esse eos personas à *Deo Patre Filioque essentiâ diversas*, et ipsis vel infinitis *minores.* Quæ enim reddi potest ratio, quare, ordine dignitatis inverso, septem Spiritus *creati*, medio inter Patrem et Christum loco ponerentur? Aut quare, initio et fine hujus commatis, sermo esset de Authore gratiæ, in medio non item? Aut quare Johannes, omisso Spiritu Sancto, gratiæ Datore, servos et ministrantes Angelos hic oraret? Aut cur Angelus tam vehementer repelleret Johannem adorantem, quem hic invenerat Angelis supplicantem?

See also Ridley's Moyer's Lect. p. 19; Allix. 367—371; and Dr Gill, ch. iii. sect. 18. Seven was pre-eminently the sacred number, implying all perfection, among Eastern nations. See Dr Pye Smith, Sermon on the Holy Spirit,

p. 51, note and references. See, in a note of Grabe, on Bull, D. F. N. sect. II. c. vii., at the end, a quotation from Tertullian: "Ita connexus Patris in Filio, et Filii in Paraclete, tres efficit coherentes, alterum ex altero. Qui tres unum sunt, non unus: quomodo dictum est: EGO ET PATER UNUM SUMUS; ad substantiæ unitatem, non ad numeri singularitatem."

NOTE H. (p. 151.)

Archbishop Wake thus handles this doctrine, in his "Commentary upon the Catechism:"—

7. Q. "Did not you before say that there is but one God? And how do you now say that the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God?"

A. "That there is but one God, the holy Scriptures plainly declare: and even reason itself confirms it to us. And yet the same Scriptures as plainly declare every one of these three to be God. And the only way we know of reconciling these two seemingly contrary assertions, is, to say, that these three are of one and the same *Divine Nature*, communicated from the Father to the Son, and from *both* to the Holy Ghost: and that therefore they, together, make but one God.

8. Q. "How can three distinct *persons* so partake of the Divine Nature, or Essence, as all together to make but one God?"

A. "That is not my concern to explain. This I am sure, that if the Scriptures be (as we all allow that they are) the word of God, what they plainly deliver must be true, because it is, in effect, delivered by God, who can neither be himself deceived, nor will deceive me. Now that they deliver both these propositions to me, *That the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God*, and yet, *That these are not three Gods, but one God*, I am as sure as I can be of any thing that is spoken or written for my understanding. That, therefore, both these assertions are true and credible, I am sure. But how, or after what manner, I am to understand them, so as to remove all shew of contradiction in them, this the holy Scriptures have not revealed; nor do

I therefore presume to pronounce any thing more particularly concerning it.

9. Q. "Why then do you say that they are three *Persons*, and but One in the divine *essence*?"

A. "Because I know not how better to express the unity and distinction of them: and they are terms which the Church has long received, and I see no reason to depart from them unless I knew of some better and more apt expressions in their stead."

Bp. Stillingfleet writes thus (Disc. on the Trin. ch. viii. vol. III. 466:) "*But after all, why do we assert three Persons in the Godhead?* Not because we find them in the *Athanasian Creed*, but because the Scripture hath revealed that there are *Three*, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to whom the divine nature and attributes are given. This we verily believe that the Scripture hath revealed; and that there are a great many places, of which we think no tolerable sense can be given without it: and therefore we assert this doctrine on the same grounds on which we believe the Scriptures. And if there are *three Persons* which have the *divine nature* attributed to them, what must we do in this case? Must we cast off the *unity of the divine essence*? No: that is too frequently and plainly asserted for us to call it in question. Must we reject those Scriptures which attribute divinity to the Son and Holy Ghost, as well as to the Father? That we cannot do, unless we cast off those books of Scripture wherein those things are contained." &c.

I will add the words of Dr Isaac Watts, though not a member of our Church: Sermon on the Trin. from Ephes. ii. 18.

"Since there is but one God, even the Father, according to St Paul, and since the Father is the only true God, according to Christ's own expression, then the Son and Spirit cannot have another or different Godhead from that of the Father: but since the Son and Spirit also are true God, it must be by some communion in the same true Godhead which belongs to the Father. For if it were another Godhead, that would make another God; and thus the Christian religion would have two or three Gods, which is contrary to the whole tenor of the Gospel."

Prop. xiv.

Prop. xvi.

And again; "Upon the whole, it appears that there is,

and there must be, some real union and communion in Godhead, between the Sacred Three, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, to answer and support the divine names, and titles, and attributes, &c., which are ascribed to them all: and there is and must be some sufficient distinction between them, to sustain these distinct personal characters and offices, and to answer to these distinct representations of Scripture: though how far this oneness of Godhead, and this personal distinction extend, may not be easy for us to find out exactly, and to describe to the understanding and satisfaction of our fellow Christians."

He says of the doctrine of a Trinity, in the Preface to his Sermons; "It is a doctrine that runs through the whole of our serious transactions with God, *and therefore it is necessary to be known by men.*"

He adds; "Though I have entered into some further enquiries on this divine subject, and made humble attempts to give clearer ideas of it, in order to vindicate the truth and glory of this sacred article; yet I have never changed my belief and profession of any necessary and important part of it, as will here appear with abundant evidence¹."

In the "Assembly's Catechism" (that of orthodox Dissenters) it is said: "There are three Persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; the same in substance, equal in power and glory: and these three are one God."

We do not pretend that our creed is without difficulty to the mind, but that it is agreeable to Scripture.

The Arian scheme gets rid of the difficulty, by supposing Christ to be a God wholly distinct from, and inferior to the

¹ I have made these extracts from Dr Watts, because it has of late been attempted by the Unitarians (who are not very scrupulous as to the evidence upon which they claim the sanction of great names to their opinions) to revive the imputation, that he entertained their views. An anonymous tract, said to have been found on a book stall, with his name and that of his sister *written* in it, is boldly ascribed to him. No other copy of it is known to exist. It was republished as his in the year 1816. It professes the doctrine of Sabellius as to Christ, and of Socinus as to the Holy Spirit.

The celebrated Mr Channing quietly says: "Locke was a Unitarian:" Vol. i. 579, "Newton too was a Unitarian:" and Dr Samuel Clarke a Unitarian." These ^{580.} are sweeping assertions, which it would be difficult to make good from their writings. See as to Locke, Sermon III. note L, latter part. Clarke receives the *three Creeds*, though not entirely after our view. Ser. Doctr. Part III. c. ii. end.

Father; to be a *creature*. This is easier to *conceive*, but more difficult to *believe*; because it is in opposition to the clear voice of Scripture, the only safe foundation for belief, in what concerns the nature of God.

The Socinian scheme may be yet *easier*, but it is also more in opposition to Scripture: it raises a *man* to the power and attributes and honour of *God*.

The Unitarian scheme is still *readier* to understand, but wider from truth, if Scripture be the test of truth. (See Sermon I. note B.)

NOTE I. (p. 153.)

Hey supposes the present Trinitarian Creed to have attained its present form in the following manner.

“Men would not be content to use the expressions separately, as the Scriptures do, but would bring them together, and endeavour to make a *System* out of them, so as to solve all difficulties. They could seldom do this without getting into other difficulties, which would be opposed, and in return defended. One man, fearing to infringe upon the fundamental doctrine of all rational religion, the Unity of God, would neglect all *distinction of persons*. This *Sabellius*, and those called *Patri-passians*, Praxeas, &c. are supposed to have done, and so to have taught *one* God, with *three names*. Another, convinced that the Scriptures make a *distinction* between Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and seeing that distinction in a strong light, in order to secure it, makes a *sub-ordination*¹; makes the Son sub-ordinate to the Father, and the Holy Ghost to the Son: this did *Arius*. A third, shocked at the idea of an inequality, determines that the Son must be *equal* to the Father, and the Holy Ghost to the Son; and insists upon this in such unqualified terms, as to constitute in effect *three distinct Gods*.”

“When the moderate and reasonable Christians saw men running into error in these different ways, they would

¹ Sub-ordination of *nature*, not merely of *order* and *office*: for *that* we hold (see note L). The Arians believed Christ to be of a *created* substance, and so an *inferior* God. See Sermon I. note O.

naturally endeavour to *check* them; and the expressions, which they fixed upon in order to answer that end, would contain the *doctrine* of the Trinity, as we now profess it." B. iv. Art. i. Sect. 4.

NOTE K. (p. 153.)

It is the obvious purport of the words of our Lord, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned," to annex conditions to his mercy; to restrict his salvation to such as shall accept his Gospel without reserve; and, in token thereof, be baptized, in acknowledgement of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, *as God*; as he by these words, and in many ways, taught them to be.

It could not be his meaning herein, to leave us at liberty to employ in baptism the mere names of these sacred Persons, ascribing to them such *nature* and *character* as we may choose. Such a license would render Christianity a motley group of religions, as many and various as men's fancies, rather than a profession of "one faith, one baptism, one God." His intention assuredly was, to require all men to own them in the very characters in which he had revealed them, and now distinctly asserted for them by this formulary; which, if it holds them not up as alike and together God, is without intelligible aim or instruction.

Belief in whatever else he had taught, and obedience to whatever else he had commanded, were to follow. But this confession of faith was appointed as an *indispensable preliminary to reception as his disciples*.

Since God is represented everywhere in Scripture as ONE, this commanded confession of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, as God, requires us to acknowledge equally in each of them, whatever belongs to the nature and essence of God, without disparagement of that unity. Such is the true scope and proper force of these words of our Lord. They enjoin a profession of faith *in a Trinity in Unity*, in order to our admission into the fellowship of Christ's religion. And as Christ, who thus, to this end, exacted the acknowledgement of himself as God, in the

Mark xvi.
16; comp.
Matt. xxviii.
19.

Waterland,
ii. 176.

Eph. iv. 5

Matt. xxviii.
20.

Bull, Pr. et
Ap. Tr. c. vi.
n. 27.
Waterland,
v. beginning
of ch. vi.
Stillfleet,
Disc. on the
Trin. ch. ix.

character of the Son, spake in the manifest and avowed nature of man also, a confession of him as *both God and man*, is implied.

Thus belief in the *doctrine of the Trinity*, and in the *Incar-*
 Mark xvi. 16. *nation of our Lord*, is, in this his final commandment, enjoined to all who would "*be saved*"—saved, that is, as *Christians*.

Such a restriction of his mercy is seen to be agreeable to divine wisdom and goodness. The Son of God came down from heaven, and took upon him the fashion of a man, that he might restore to us the favour and the knowledge of God; the former by his death on our behalf; the latter by his lessons; and both as *necessary*, in order to our restoration to life eternal. Could it be looked for, as a suitable conclusion to instruction having such an aim, and conveyed through such a channel, to proclaim it as, in fact, useless; that it matters not whether men believe it, or something entirely at variance with it; whether they own and worship God as made known by him, or whether after any other view they may fancy in preference? Belief of the truth concerning the Deity is the foundation of a right worship, and of just affections towards him; and hence was *reasonably* and *mercifully* made by Christ essential, as an introduction to the religion which he came to teach, and to the blessings which he came to bestow, in the name of each Person in the communion of the one Godhead.

Agreeably to this commandment of their Lord, the apostles in all the Churches which they planted, established it as a uniform and indispensable rule, to instruct converts in the doctrines of the Trinity and of the Incarnation of the Son of God, preparatory to baptism; and to require of them a corresponding declaration of faith. This appears from the consistent usage of all Churches, and from the agreeing purport of all the summaries and explications of the faith professed on this occasion. The earliest known *formulary* employed for this purpose, was framed after the model of our Saviour's injunction: "I believe in God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost¹."

See Pearson,
 p. 43.
 Waterland,
 v. 158—163.
 Bull, J. E.
 C. c. iv. n. 3,
 &c. and
 Grabe's
 Annot.
 Bingham,
 Or. Eccl.
 b. x. c. iii.
 Stillingfleet,
 Disc. on the
 Trin. ch. ix.
 Wall, vol. ii.
 337, 8.
 Berriman,
 24.

¹ In the original, the term *God* is yet more distinctly seen to attach to each of the three Persons following; Πιστεύω εἰς τὸν Θεόν, τὸν πατέρα, τὸν υἱόν, καὶ τὸ ἅγιον Πνεῦμα. Bull, J. E. C. c. iv. n. 3.

Other instruction was doubtless given concurrently, and other faith professed. That which our Lord peremptorily imposed, regarded only the *God*, whose religion was to be adopted. The *first elements of that religion* were also necessarily to be understood and assented to, before it could be embraced. The death of Christ on man's behalf, his resurrection and ascension, as an exhibition of his divine character and present authority, the remission of sins through him and our own resurrection to judgment, were portions of the learning and belief which were requisite, both as a qualification for baptism, and as a motive for desiring it. Accordingly, we find these topics repeatedly urged by the apostles, in their preaching. And they enter into the several expositions of baptismal faith, which have come down to us from the early times of Christianity. But it does not appear at *what*² time they were grafted into the formulary by which faith was professed in the Trinity and in the Incarnation of our Lord, so as to make with it one continuous recital.

The preparatory instruction and examination of candidates for baptism seems, from the first, to have been *catechetical*, and their faith to have been chiefly avowed in reply to *separate* questions. Hence it is probable, that for awhile this *Creed of the Trinity* was repeated by itself, as referring to a distinct subject, and grounded on a distinct commandment; and that it retained its simple form so long as it was received in its true sense, as intended by our Lord,

See Grabe's Annot. ad Bull, J. E. C. c. v. vi. vii. Bingham. Or. Eccl. b. x. c. i. sect. 6. Wall, II. 345. As to death and res. Acts ii. 23—34; iii. 13; x. 36—40; 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4. Rem. of sin, Acts ii. 38; iii. 39; x. 36 and 43; xiii. 38, 19. Our res. Acts iv. 2; xxiii. 6; xxiv. 15, 21, 25; 1 Thess. iv. 14; 1 Cor. xv. 12. Bull, J. E. C. c. iv. v. vi. and Grabe. Waterl. II., S. viii.; Bingham, O. E. b. x. c. iii. Waterl. v. 160, 1. Grabe, Annot. n. 9. Wall, II. 367. Bull, J. E. C. vi. 4.

² There is a considerable difference of opinion as to the period when this baptismal creed was first enlarged. Some hold that it assumed nearly the form of the present Apostles' Creed, in *their* time, and in *their* hands. Others, that no additions were made to it until heresies sprung up, and none but in rebuke of them. Grabe, in his notes to c. v. vi. vii. of Bull's J. E. C., argues strongly for the former view. Bingham agrees with him. See his Orig. Eccl. b. x. c. iii.

Grabe relies chiefly on the frequency with which the apostles, in their recorded discourses, insist on the chief articles of the creed called after them. But while there can be little doubt that the converts were from the first instructed by them on these points, and required to avow their corresponding belief, prior to baptism, it does not follow that their faith was declared in one *continuous formulary*, and grafted at once into the *creed of the Trinity*.

See in the above authors mention of some who dissent from their opinion. See also Waterland (who is one of these), vol. 153—163; Wall, II. 337, &c. Bull, J. E. C. c. iv—vi.

Bull, J. E. C.
c. vi. n. 18.
Berriman,
308. Wall, II.
338. Waterl.
v. 160—3;
Dean Vin-
cent. See
Mant's Com.
Pr. Nic.
Creed. n. t.

See Cleaver
on the Orig.
and Utility
of Creeds.

and as expounded by those who received it in charge from him. But when wilful men began to assign to his words a meaning other than his, it was thought necessary to put a stop to their corruption of the truth, by a fuller expression of it in his very creed; so as to make it evident to the ignorant and unwary, that they who adopted any of these errors could not be regarded as holding the faith prescribed by Christ. And this was the *bounden duty* of those in authority: it being to the *true purport* of his words, and not to their *bare form*, that he had required assent, as a *condition of reception into his Church*.

The doctrines held up in the confession appointed by our Lord, are, as has been stated, those of the *Trinity*, and of his *Incarnation*. The additions to his creed were made with a view to *preserve* these doctrines, not to *add to them*.

The first of these doctrines brought openly into question, was not the *divine nature* of either person of the Trinity, but the *true incarnation* of the Son of God. The earliest heretics either disputed the reality of his *human nature*, or of its union with the divine. To hold up the right faith against them, those particulars of our Lord's history which establish his *true manhood* were now inserted in the body of the creed, as setting forth what had always been implied in it. It was declared of the "only Son of God," that "he was *born* of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary, *crucified* and *buried*, *rose again*, and *ascended into heaven*."

See Serm.
note K.

See Waterl.
IV. 308.

As the same heretics ascribed the creation of the world, not to the supreme God, but to certain inferior powers, it was now, or later, added to the description of the Father, against them, that he was the "*maker¹ of heaven and earth*."

In other respects, belief touching the Father and the Holy Ghost were left expressed in the original simplicity of this formulary.

It is not known at what precise period the above change was made. But as the heresy in question sprang up in the

¹ Grabe thinks these words were inserted for the *pagans*. Annot. n. 3, 4, ad Vol. IV. 308. Bull, J. E. C. c. v. VI. VII. But Waterland says, "they are not found in any early, known form of the *Apostles' Creed*." See also Wall. II. 360, 1.

time of one or more² of the apostles, it is probable that *they* were the first to take upon themselves the responsibility of adding to the *words* prescribed by our Lord, in order the better to carry out the *spirit* of his commandment. Allusions seem to be made in Scripture to some known formulary of faith. And the fact, that the Western Church, where no heresies prevailed, did not adopt *in baptism* the creed as enlarged *subsequently* in the East, but *did* use our Lord's form with *the additions first given*, seems to shew that *these* had been inserted from the very early times, so as to become the basis of *every* creed.

Now came the heresy of the Arians, denying the *true divinity* of our Lord. They were willing to retain the language of the baptismal creed generally used³. But then they attached to it a sense derogatory to our Lord, and contrary to the true meaning of his words, making him to be of a nature inferior to the Father, and in fact a *creature*. Hence, to hold up to all, that these notions were at variance with the faith made by Christ essential to salvation, that faith was now set forth more distinctly in the creed itself. His true *deity* and *equality of nature with the Father*, as intended by him, and hitherto taught by those who received his doctrine from him, or were instructed by them, were asserted, *in expressions adapted to the particular notions now erroneously inculcated*. With *this* view, he was pronounced to be "the *only-begotten*, begotten of the Father, that is of *the substance of the Father*: God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten *not made*, *consubstantial* (or of *one substance*) with the Father, by whom *all things were made*, both things in heaven and things in earth⁴."

1 Cor. xv. 3,
4; 2 Tim. i.
13; Rom. vi.
17. Berri-
man, p. 5.
Cleaver,
p. 129.

Wall, II. 350,
1. Bull, J.
E. C. c. vi.
n. 20, 21.
See Sermon. 1.
note O.

Bull, D.F.N
pro-œmum
J. E. C. c. vi.
n. 22.

² It has already been stated (p. 36, note), that both St Peter and St Paul are thought to have witnessed the rise of the heresy which took its name from Cerinthus. To the authorities there cited, add Grabe. Annot. as before, n. 8; Waterland, II. 158; v. 182; Hey, Lect. B. I. Appendix, sect. 25.

³ One bolder sect of them, however, the *Eunomians*, would not even adhere to the *form of baptism itself*, and thereby evidently shewed, that their notions were wide apart from the doctrine of our Lord. They baptized "In the name of the uncreated Father, of the *created* Son, and of the sanctifying Spirit, *created* by that Son." See their creed in Wall, II. 352.

⁴ These expressions were, for the most part, not now first invented. They are found in the creeds of particular Churches, where they had been previously adopted

Berriman,
234.

Wall, II. 325.
Waterl. II.
192.

See end of
note B.
Serm. 1.

This minuteness and precision were compelled by the evasions of the Arians, and as a security against their many shifts and subtleties.

Bull, J. E. C.
c. vi. 19.
Berriman,
186, 234.

Though the Arian system involved, by consequence, the degradation of the Holy Spirit, *this* heresy had not yet been *openly broached*. Therefore it was not thought necessary, at this time, to add any more particular explication of his true deity, hitherto sufficiently set forth in the original form, and expounded in the instruction preparatory to baptism. For the object of *all* additions was merely to put down error: as, in modern times, with respect to *Articles of Religion*, which grow as errors grow.

Wall, II. 356,
9.

Berriman,
265, 6.

But as soon as this consequence of the Arian heresy came to be developed in that of the Macedonians, the truth concerning the Holy Ghost was fenced with new propositions. The council of Constantinople added to the Nicene Creed those articles which set forth more distinctly the Holy Ghost as God, agreeably to the true purport of our Lord's injunction; ascribing to him the *title, nature, operations* and *worship* of the Father and the Son. Belief is proclaimed in him, as "*Lord*" (Jehovah), as "*Giver of Life*" (Creator and reviver of man), as "*proceeding from the Father*" (deriving his *very substance*, in a manner indeed different from the Son, and inconceivable to us, as is *his* generation), and as "*together with the Father and the Son, worshipped and glorified*" (the object alike of adoration and praise).

Berriman,
262.

Bull, J. E. C.
vi. n. 11, 12.

And because the perverseness of the *Gnostic* heretics would not allow the Holy Spirit of the *old* Dispensation to be the same with that of the *new*, it was added, that "*he spake by the prophets.*"

Bull, as be-
fore, n. 22.

Some minor alterations were made in the portion of the creed which regards the Son; and among them, in that part

adopted against the like errors, earlier than it had been thought necessary to have recourse to a general Council. So also the addition respecting the Father: "maker of all things visible and invisible," which was now inserted against the Gnostic heretics, who portioned out the creation among certain inferior powers. And in like manner, "*one* God, the Father"—"*one* Lord Jesus Christ," which have reference to them. For the Gnostics believed in *two* First Principles, *two independent Gods*; and also separated *Jesus Christ* into *two* beings, Jesus and Christ, one human, the other divine. Against the same heresy the terms touching the incarnation were enlarged.

Bull, J. E. C.
vi. 16.
Berriman,
308.

which teaches his true human nature. This had been thought sufficiently set forth in the Nicene Creed, in the clause, "*was incarnate and became man.*" But the heresy of the Apollinarians having now broken forth, one of whose doctrines was, that our Lord's body was compounded *in heaven*, and not *consubstantial with ours*, it was declared that he was "incarnate by the Holy Ghost, *of the Virgin Mary*, and made man"—receiving the proper substance of our nature from a *human parent*.

Berriman,
263, 4.

There were also now added to the Nicene Creed those articles which do not regard the Trinity, but have already been alluded to, as a necessary part of the baptismal faith; and which had before this time been annexed to the Apostles' Creed, chiefly used in the West, and to those of different Churches in the East; viz. belief in the "one Holy Catholic Church," (a profession of this its true faith), in "one baptism for the remission of sins," &c. The attention of the council of Nice had been directed chiefly to the creed of the Trinity, and the heresy of Arius; and without intending that these useful articles should be omitted, had declared nothing respecting them, leaving to each Church to employ them in their own fashion, as not entering into our Lord's required confession.

Berriman,
309.

The creed thus enlarged by the council of Constantinople, retained the name of *Nicene*, from that which had served as the basis of it; and has remained unchanged under that name, to the present day; with the exception of one addition made long after by the Churches of the West, of the words, "*and the Son*," after those of "*the Father*," in declaring the procession of the Holy Ghost.

Wall, II. 357.
Berriman,
310.

Wall, II. 358.

Such were the heresies which gave rise to the successive developments of the baptismal creed of our Lord. Though no further change was made in the form of this creed, yet new explications of it were called for, and put forth on a like authority, in opposition to errors which sprung up upon points not yet touched upon.

The heresies hitherto referred to respected the *divine nature* of the Son or Spirit, or the *human nature* of the latter. Those which were now broached regarded the *mode of union* of his two natures. "Though by the decrees of

Cent. v. ch.
v. sect. 5.

former Councils (says Mosheim), it had been clearly and peremptorily determined that Christ was, at the same time, *true God* and *true man*; yet no Council had hitherto decreed any thing concerning the *manner* and *effect* of this union of the two natures in the divine Saviour; nor was this matter as yet become a subject either of enquiry or dispute among Christians. The consequence of this was, that the Christian doctors expressed themselves differently concerning this mystery. Some used such forms of expression as seemed to widen the difference between the Son of God and the Son of Man, and thus to *divide* the nature of Christ into two *distinct persons*; others, on the contrary, seemed to confound too much the Son of God with the Son of Man, and to suppose the nature of CHRIST *composed* of his divinity and humanity *blended together into one*.”

Mosheim,
cent. IV.
ch. v. sect.
17.
Berriman,
252.

Three chief heresies are alluded to in these observations. That of the Apollinarians indeed, which gave rise to the other two, may be regarded as affecting the *perfect manhood* of Christ, rather than the *manner of union*. For they supposed him to be destitute of a *rational soul*, of which the divine nature supplied the place. It seemed to follow as a consequence, that the *divine nature suffered* the pains of crucifixion. In opposition to this unscriptural view, the *Nestorians* asserted the perfectness of *both* natures in Christ. But then they represented them to be so distinct, in action and perception, after their union, as scarcely to make any unity at all. Their doctrine amounted to little more than the inhabitation of the prophets of old by the Holy Spirit; except that they supposed the union of the divine and human natures in Christ to be *permanent*. There was no real *unity of person*. Indeed, they came at length in the form to avow *two distinct persons* in Christ, and to hold only a unity of *will and affection*¹.

Mosheim,
cent. v. ch.
v. sect. v—
XII.
Berriman,
274, &c.

This error gave occasion, through the zeal of controversy, to one of an opposite character. The *Eutychians* made the union of Christ's two natures to be so intimate, as to amount

Berriman,
278, 279.

¹ It was against the Nestorians that the union of the two natures in Christ, in *one person*, was illustrated by a reference to the union of the body and soul in man, in one person. But as this gave a handle to the imputation (though groundlessly) of Apollinarianism, it was for a while disused.

to a *mixture* or *confusion* of the two, from which a *third* resulted. Both natures underwent a *change*. Neither the divine or human retained any original, characteristic property. There was not a mere unity of *person*, but the two natures became *one new nature*.

These errors gave rise to as many Councils, in which they were condemned, but no addition was made to the *baptismal creed*, in consequence. The truth was finally set forth with respect to them all, in the following passage in the decree of the Council of Chalcedon, the last of the three.

“We confess one and the same Son our Lord Jesus Christ, the same *perfect in Godhead*, and the same *perfect in manhood*, truly God and truly man, the same consisting of a *reasonable soul* and body, consubstantial with the Father as touching the Godhead, and the same *consubstantial with us* as touching the manhood, in all things like unto us, without sin; begotten of the Father, as to his divinity, before the worlds, but the same in the last days *born* according to his humanity, of *Mary* the Virgin and *Mother of God*², for us and for our salvation; *one and the same Jesus Christ*, the Son, the Lord, the only-begotten, acknowledged in two natures, without *mixture*, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably (*the difference of nature being in no wise destroyed by this union*, but rather the propriety of each nature preserved, concurring in one *person*, or hypostasis) not *as parted or divided* into two persons, but one and the same only-begotten Son, God the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ; as both the *former prophets have taught* concerning him, and *Christ has taught us himself*, and the *Creed of the Fathers* has delivered to us.”

Such is a brief and general outline of the chief heresies which gave rise to the successive developments of the baptismal creed. In no instance was it contemplated to add any *new article of belief*. All was done with the mere view to maintain and preserve what had always been considered the doctrine intended by Christ, against innovations inconsistent with it. This (as has been before remarked) was an

Mosheim,
cent. v. ch.
v. sect.
xiii—xvi.
Berriman,
287—301.

Berriman,
306.

Against
Apollin.

Against
Nestor. and
Grost.

Against
Eutych.

Against
Nestor.

Berriman,
307, 8; and
312.

² This expression (though not new) was in contradiction to the Nestorians, who held that the union of the two natures did not take place *until after the birth of Jesus*, instead of *at his conception*.

Berriman,
301.

obvious and strict duty, in those entrusted with the government of his Church. Our Lord meant by his words to proclaim certain truths as essential of belief, to all who would become his disciples. And it was incumbent on those whom he appointed "stewards of his mysteries," and dispensers of his grace, faithfully to provide, that none should be debarred from his mercy, through the substitution of doctrines subversive of those to which he required assent, as a condition of it. And it was only to enforce his own declaration, and the corresponding views of the apostles, that at the close of these expositions of that faith which he had commanded in baptism, these Councils added an anathema, which proclaimed *salvation to depend on adopting, or rejecting them.*

1 Cor. iv. 1.
See Cleaver's
Serm. on
Creeds.

Mark xvi. 16.
See Tit. iii.
10; 2 Pet. ii.
1; Gal. i. 8;
v. 20, 21.
Wall, ii. 347.
Berriman,
306.

See Bull, J.
E. C. c. vi.

1b. n. 8.

Wall, ii. 360.

That no novelty was introduced, is manifest from the fact, that most of the expressions inserted in the creed by these Councils were taken from the previous expositions of faith of particular Churches, where the heresies had first sprung up. The same conclusion follows from the fact that the Western Church, wherein, no heresy prevailing, it was not thought necessary to substitute this enlarged creed in the ceremony of baptism, yet adopted it in their liturgy. This shews it to have been looked upon, as in agreement with the faith set forth in the simpler language of the Apostles' Creed.

The *Athanasian Creed* (as it is improperly called, not having *that form*) is an aggregate of the several explications which have been thus called for, of our Lord's baptismal faith, in opposition to the heresies which have been enumerated¹. It is an exposition of the doctrines of the Trinity,

Vol. iv. 265.

D. F. N. c.
viii. n. 4.
Hey, B. iii.
ch. ix. sect.
9.

¹ Waterland is of opinion that this Creed was composed *before* the condemnation of the *Eutychian* heresy by the Council of Chalcedon. But it often happened, that heresies arose and were noticed by individual writers, or by particular Churches, before they acquired importance enough to call for a general Council. Bull shews reason to think, that *this* had been broached so early as the time of *Tertullian*. Waterland allows that there are expressions in this Creed, which are applicable to the opinions of Eutyches.

It was never used in baptism, nor has it authority, as decreed by a general Council. It is the production of an *individual* not certainly known. But each particular in it is agreeable to the decisions of the Church. See Waterl. vol. iv. on this whole subject. For his own Commentary upon this Creed, vol. iv. c. x; and for the ancient one of Fortunatus, p. 317. For the opinion of Baxter, and of moderate Dissenters, upon it, see p. 307.

and of the Incarnation of the Son of God, in such a guarded form as had become necessary, in order to preserve them uncorrupt, after his intention. Its aim is not to throw any new light upon these mysteries, but to warn us against such explanations as are manifestly inconsistent with, and subversive of them. Hence the heads are selected, and the language also, with reference to the subtle misrepresentations which were to be refuted. Expressions which, in *form*, affirm a truth, are mainly intended as a preservative against error: Cleaver, 138, 9. and they cannot be rightly appreciated, or even understood, unless the particular error is kept in view.

Our Lord required of all who would be admitted as disciples of his religion, a previous belief and confession of *the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, as together one God, and of his own Incarnation.* This condition was to be of perpetual obligation. And this it is, which is set forth in this exposition. It is not intended by the damnatory clauses, as they are called, to proclaim penalties stricter than his own, or to attach them to a larger creed than he imposed. It is not their true aim to set forth, that a title to his salvation belongs only to those who have considered *all these particular propositions*, and have come to a right conclusion upon them. For *some of them* were never propounded for belief, until the errors sprang up to which they are opposed, and therefore formed no part of the faith of the *early* Christians; and the *necessary* faith has never been enlarged. Dean Vincent. See Mant's Com. Pray. Art. Nic. Creed, n. t. Some of them can only be understood properly, by those who have historical knowledge of the heresies against which they are directed. Hey, b. III. ch. ix. It is, therefore, the true scope of the damnatory clauses, to announce, that they who speculate upon the points set forth in this exposition, and take up with *other notions than those here laid down*, do not hold the faith required by our Lord in baptism, and therefore lose the blessings which he restricts to that faith. It is sufficient to believe *generally*, in the one Godhead of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and in the Incarnation of the Son of God, if *we do not proceed to a more particular creed, inconsistent with these doctrines.* The following comment of Wickliff upon the clause, "So that in all things as is aforesaid, the Unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity

is to be worshipped," is quoted with approval by Waterland:
 Vol. iv. 294. "And so we conclude here, as is before said, that there is both an Unity of Godhead, and a Trinity of Persons; and that the Trinity in this Unity is to be worshipped above all things; and whosoever will be saved must thus think of the Trinity, if not *thus explicitly* (or in *every particular*) yet thus in *general*, or *implicitly*." And Waterland himself pronounces of the doctrine, that *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are all strictly divine and uncreated, and yet are not three Gods, but one God*; "He that believes this simply, and in the *general*, as laid down in Scripture, believes quite enough." And again: "Common Christians believe enough if they believe the *main* things, under a *general view*, without branching them out into all the minute particulars which depend upon them, or belong to them." But such a general assent, in full sincerity, is *necessary*, upon the very authority of our Lord. And the same holds with regard to the doctrine of his incarnation, *i. e.* the perfect, indissoluble union of the entire natures of both God and man, in his one person. The *general* truth must be honestly entertained and embraced by all; while the particulars laid down against the misrepresentations of heretics, may be innocently left to those who have the means to learn, and the capacity to consider them. Hammond and other eminent and orthodox divines of our Church concur in these sentiments.

Waterland,
 i. 227; v. 21,
 52; see also
 iv. 312.
 Cleaver, 138,
 144.

See Hey, b.
 iii. c. ix.

See Water-
 land, iv.
 305—7.

Waterland,
 iv. 283, 299.

Neither is it meant to "exclude any such merciful abatements, or allowances, as shall be made for men's particular circumstances, weakness, frailties, ignorance, inability, or the like;" to deny that mercy may be reserved in the divine counsels for such as err, even on the fundamental points of the baptismal creed, if they are not *wilful* and *obstinate* perverters or rejecters of the truth, or indifferent to it; for those who lack capacity or means of knowledge; or who, with prayer for the divine guidance, "search the Scriptures diligently whether these things be so," and believe according to the light vouchsafed to them. Of such we pronounce nothing expressly, because nothing has been expressly pronounced by Christ. *Exceptions* to God's laws are ever kept by him in wise reserve. It is said of the transgressors of the *moral* law; "There is a sin *not unto*

1 John v. 17.

death." But it would not have been for our good to make known its bounds, lest we should be satisfied with only just keeping within them, and the heart be ever hovering about the verge, and hankering after evil. Accordingly, no hint of them is afforded us. "The wrath of God is revealed against *all* unrighteousness:" "Cursed is every one that continueth not in *all* things which are written in the book of the law, to do them." God hath reserved to *himself*, to make allowance and exception; to exact, in the great day of account, "much from him to whom much has been given;" and to make a lighter reckoning, where grace and opportunities have been less freely bestowed; to "beat with many, or with few stripes." "If there be a *willing mind*, it will be accepted, according to that a man hath, and not according to that a man hath not." So with regard to a *right faith*. It is required, in proportion with our means and talents. God sees our hearts, our capacities, and our circumstances; the degree of our teachableness, and the extent of our prejudices, of our obstinacy, and of our indifference and neglect; and will square our sentence to our desert. But the measure of his final expectation from each, and the limits of his mercy, are known to him alone. It is not for man to dispense with any portion of his doctrines, or to tamper with his threats; but to preach a *perfect faith*, as a *perfect obedience*; to proclaim a strict necessity to believe Christ in *all* things that he hath taught, as well as to "observe all things whatsoever he hath commanded;" and to hold up the blessing and the curse which he himself pronounced; "*He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*"

Rom. i. 18.

Gal. iii. 10.

Luke xii. 47, 8.

2 Cor. viii. 12.

Matt. xxviii. 20.

Mark xvi. 16.

See Cleaver, 145, 6.

How God will deal with those to whom the Gospel has never been preached, is not told us. Its lesson is merely, how we shall be saved *as Christians*. Neither could it be of any use that more should be told: for none whom the Gospel reaches, can be concerned in the fate of those who are not blessed with the knowledge of it. The instruction needful for us to be given in the Gospel, is, how God will deal with those who either are acquainted with it, or may be if they will. To all such the above declaration of our Saviour applies, and they will do well to look to it.

NOTE L. (pp. 23, 149.)

Cudworth,
III. 139.
Bull, D. F.
N. sect. iv.
c. ii.
Waterland,
III. 1—27.

The absolute equality asserted between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, relates to their *nature* and *substance*, whereof the whole properties and perfections belong to each of them, in the same fulness. On this point the sense of Scripture is clear. There is but *one nature and substance* of God, and it is ascribed to them severally. Any inequality or difference *here* would make *distinct Gods*, and establish a *plurality*, contrary to the whole tenor of revelation.

But in the "*manner of subsistence*" in the one divine substance, there is not only a distinction, but a difference; and a difference with *preeminence*, and *subordination*.

Bull, D. F.
N. sect. iv.
c. i. ii.
Pearson,
47—50.
Wat. iv. 42.
Pearson and
Bull, and
Wat. as
above.
Whitby,
Tract, p. 81.

Thus the Father subsists *wholly of himself*, and *underrived*. He is what he is, without communication from any other.

Bull, D. F.
N. sect. III.
and iv. c. ii.
Pearson,
382.
Waterl. iv.
29.
Potter, 112—
162.
Dr S. Clarke,
Pt. II. sect.
xvi.

The Son, as to his "*manner of subsistence*," is *derived* from the Father. The mode of derivation is inconceivable by us, who know not any like unto it. The relation of *Father* and *Son* is employed, to convey so much to us as we can comprehend; viz. that with a perfect *parity of nature*, there is a preeminence of *order*, grounded on a derivation from the one to the other. The derivation is not indeed, as in man, with any *priority of time*, or from *an act of the will* in the Father. It is not a passing from non-existence to existence, in the Son. It respects only *relation* and *manner of subsistence*, and is both *eternal* and *necessary*. There was never a time *when the Son was not*¹.

¹ Some of the early Fathers, before the question of the *Sonship* of Christ had been well considered, entertained a notion, that though "*the Word*" had been *eternally* "God," and "with God," yet he had not always borne the relation of *Son*; but that this arose with the "Economy" of Creation. This opinion, however, soon yielded to the deliberate sentence of the Church, that "*there never was a time when the Son was not.*"

It is important to bear this difference in mind, because otherwise it might be thought that the Fathers who asserted a generation *in time*, disputed the *eternity* of our Lord's divine nature, which is not the fact. On *this* point there

The same is true of the Holy Ghost. With a perfect participation in the plenitude of the one divine nature, there is in this sacred Person a subordination of order to the Father and the Son, as *derived from both*. The manner of derivation differs from that of the Son, and is not revealed. Hence we cannot have any notion of it. It is therefore expressed by the general term "*proceeding*." It relates not to any *priority of time*, or to any *act of the will*, on the part of the Father and the Son; but regards only the "*manner of subsistence*" in the divine substance; the *relation* of the Holy Ghost to the Father and the Son.

Bull, D. F.
N. sect. 11.
c. iii. n. 17.
Hey, b. iv.
Art. v. sect.
14.

Pearson,
382.

These truths are thus described in the Athanasian Creed.

1st, The perfect *equality of nature* :

See Horsley,
295.
Potter, 161,
2.

"The *Godhead* of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is all *one*: the glory *equal*, the majesty *co-eternal*:"

"*Such*² as the Father is, *such* is the Son, and *such* is the Holy Ghost:"

"In this Trinity none is *afore* or *after* another: none is *greater* or *less* than another:"

"But the whole three persons are *co-eternal* together, and *co-equal*."

All this relates to their *common nature*, and *substance*. The difference, and *subordination*, in the *manner of subsistence*, and *relation*, are thus represented:

"The³ Father is made *of none*, neither created, nor *begotten*:"

was always unanimity. The disagreement merely regarded his character of "*Son*;" whether *this* had been eternal or no.

See Bull, D. F. N. sect. iii. c. ii. and v.—x. and Grabe's Annot. on the former chapter; also the Bishop of Lincoln, in reference to both of them, in his Justin. p. 57, note; also pp. 354—65, and c. ix. See also Waterland, vol. III. 293—6, who briefly, but distinctly, gives the above view of the matter.

² This general assertion of their entire equality of nature is then expanded, by a description of the particular properties of it, as belonging to them in common. Each is "uncreate, incomprehensible^a (*i. e.* not circumscribed in place—immense—omnipresent—according to Jer. xxiii. 24; 1 Kings viii. 27), Almighty, God, and Lord."

^a See Bull
D. F. N.
sect. iv.
c. iii.

³ Mr Coleridge, in his "Table Talk," questions the orthodoxy of the Athanasian Creed, in consequence of its omission of the doctrine of subordination. But he overlooked, that it is here *described*, though not *named*.

“The Son is of the Father *alone*, not made, nor created, but *begotten* :”

“The Holy Ghost is *of the Father and of the Son* : neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but *proceeding*.”

This subordination is *original, eternal* ; always was, and always will be : being grounded on the *natural relation* of the three Persons of the Trinity.

Bull, D. F.
N. sect. iv.
c. iii. n. 15.
Pearson, 47.

There is a *further subordination*, arising out of the *Gospel Scheme*, in which each Person bears a separate part ; congruous, without doubt, to the *previous* subordination of order and relation, but distinct, and independent of it. This is called a subordination *of office, or economy*.

In this Economy, or Dispensation, it is the prerogative of the Father to exercise the administration and *supremacy* ; to *originate* the mission of reconciliation ; to *send forth* the Son and the Spirit, to *receive* the atonement, and to *grant* remission of sin to man, in virtue of it.

Pearson, 48.
Potter, 143.
Waterl. ii.
158, 165 ;
iv. 49.
Hey, ii. 444.
Bull, D. F.
N. sect. iv.
c. ii. n. 2.
c. iii.

It is the part of the Son to *receive* commission and authority, to *be sent*, to *undertake* for man, to *assume his nature*, to *atone* through it, to *mediate*, to *advocate*, to *reconcile* ; and for these ends, and in this sense, to *subject himself to the Father*.

It is the part of the Holy Ghost, to *be “sent”* by the Father and the Son, to *abide on earth*, that he may convince man of sin, awaken to righteousness, renew the heart unto that holiness which is an indispensable qualification for the divine presence, and “*seal unto the day of judgment*.”

Bull, D. F.
N. sect. iv.
c. ii. n. 2.
P. et A. T.
c. vi. n. 9.

This subordination is for a specific end, and is *temporary*. It commenced with the fall of man, and will cease at his final judgment, when the Gospel Scheme will be completed.

In the *Son*, there was a *third* subordination, after that he took our nature ; viz. that of his *manhood*. In the words of the Athanasian Creed ; He is “equal to the Father, as touching his *Godhead* ; *inferior* to the Father, as touching his *manhood*.”

The equality of *nature*, and the subordination of *order*, and of *office*, are thus clearly stated by Waterland. He is treating only of the Father and the Son ; but similar assertions apply to the Holy Ghost.

“1. *Supremacy of nature*, or supremacy of *perfection*, Vol. III. 23. is to be possessed of all perfection, and the *highest* excellency possible: and this is to be *God*. There is nothing of this kind but what is *common to Father and Son*, who are therefore *one God supreme*. And as supremacy of *dominion* and *sovereignty* (properly so called) over all creatures (as soon as they exist) is included in it, and consequent upon it; Father and Son have one *common* and undivided *sovereignty* over all; the constant doctrine of antiquity.

“2. *Supremacy of order* consists in this: that the Father has his perfections, dominion, &c. *from none*; but the Son *from the Father*. All that the Son has is referred up to the *Father*, and not *vice versâ*. This kind of supremacy is of the Father *alone*: and the Son's *subordination*, thus understood, is very consistent with his *equality of nature, dominion, perfection, and glory*, according to all antiquity.

“3. *Supremacy of office*. This, by mutual agreement and voluntary *economy*, belongs to the Father; while the Son out of voluntary condescension submits to act *ministerially*, or in the capacity of *mediator*. And the reason why the condescending part became God the *Son*, rather than God the *Father*, is, because he is a *Son*; and because it best suits with the *natural* order of persons, which had been inverted by a contrary *economy*.”

Upon this passage Bishop Van Mildert remarks: “This distinction between a supremacy of *nature* and *perfections*, and a supremacy of *order* and of *office*, is ever to be kept in view. It solves many difficulties in our apprehension of this mysterious and inscrutable subject. It makes the language of Scripture, as applied to the several persons of the Godhead, consistent and intelligible. And though it still leaves us uninformed as to that which is nowhere revealed, the *mode* in which the Persons thus subsist under one undivided substance; yet it preserves their united, as well as their distinctive properties unimpaired. This was a point which Bishop Bull had particularly laboured to establish, and had confirmed by the general concurrence of the Nicene and Ante-Nicene Fathers.” Life of Wat.
p. 94.

To the one or other of these gradations, may every expression of Scripture be referred, which implies any su-

periority of the Father to the Son, or of both to the Holy Ghost; and thus all its language will be found consistent with the perfect and equal Godhead of the three Persons in the Trinity. For example:

John xiv. 28. "My Father is greater than I¹." This comparison, so far from implying any inequality of nature, would be absurd, on such a supposition. What *creature* would think of gravely announcing, as an important religious truth, that he is *inferior to his Creator*? Having taught that he was very God, our Lord herein acquaints his disciples, that there was in himself, notwithstanding, a distinction from the Father, such as is shadowed out by this relation; in which, while the *nature* and *perfections* of both are the same, there is yet a subordination of *order*. This was a truth which the disciples were not likely to surmise of themselves, after the many intimations of his true Godhead; and therefore was worthy to be made the subject of so solemn a revelation.

Mark xiii. 32. "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no not the angels which are in heaven, *neither the Son, but the Father.*"

The Father, as exercising *Supremacy in the Gospel Scheme*, had certain matters reserved to his own appointment: and the Son was only to reveal so much as was consistent with the commission he had received. This declaration of our Lord seems to be in reference to this, his voluntary subordination. While fulfilling his mission, "The words that he spake, he spake not of himself:" "The Father which sent him, he gave him commandment what he should say:" "Even as the Father said unto him, so he spake."

Bull and Waterland think this ignorance applicable only to his *human nature*. But it seems rather to belong to his

Pearson, 46.
Horsley,
291; Cud-
worth, III,
139; Bull, D.
F. N. sect.
iv. c. ii. n. 8
—10; Dr S.
Clarke, No.
480; Dr J.
Knight, No.
830; Potter,
147.

Potter, 142
—5. Hey, b.
iv. art. ii.
sect. 32.

John xiv. 10;
xii. 49, 50.

D. F. N.
sect. ii. c. v.
n. 8.
See also Wa-
terland, vol.
I. 294; II.
162—164.
IV. 347.

¹ Coleridge, in his "Table Talk, says:

"The pet texts of a Socinian are quite enough for his confutation, with acute thinkers. If Christ had been a mere man, it would have been ridiculous for him to call himself the "Son of man:" but being God and man, it then became, in his *own assumption*, a peculiar and mysterious title. So if Christ had been a mere man, his saying, 'My Father is greater than I,' would have been as unmeaning. How immeasurably foolish and monstrous would it not be for a man, however honest, however good or wise, to say, but 'Jehovah is greater than I!'" These are the remarks of a very acute man, who thought for himself. (p. 23, 2nd Ed.)

official character. It was not a part of the revelation committed to him, to announce the time when these things should be done.

John v. 19, 30. "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do:" "I can of mine own self do nothing."

These texts may refer to the derivation of his nature, Pearson, 46 which makes everything referrible to the Father, as the *origin and source*: or they may apply to him in his subordinate character, in the Gospel Scheme.

Matt. xix. 17. "Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God."

Bull, in remarking on a passage of Origen, seems to refer D. F. N. sect. ii. c. ix. n. 13. this assertion to the *subordination of economy*; "ad Christi *οἰκονομίαν*, in assumpta natura humana susceptam." But he adds, that if it relates to him in his true and proper character of *God*, it is still suitable, under the view of his subordination of *order*, as *deriving* what he is from the Father.

Dr S. Clarke, who quotes the remark of Bull, and others No. 340. from the Fathers, with approval, adds however one of his own, which seems to come nearer the truth:

"Yet it is not improbable, but our Saviour by this manner of expression might intend to insinuate, that the young man who thus addressed him, had given him a title, which was *really due to him*, in such a sense as the person that gave it him *was not then at all aware of*."

Our Saviour, it should seem, does not mean to disclaim the title, but to expose to the young man his inconsistency, in giving him an honour due unto God, while he did not as yet acknowledge him *as such*. The objection raised, is not to the *absolute propriety* of the proposition, but to its propriety under the circumstances of the party from whom it proceeds.

1 Cor. viii. 6. "To us there is but one God." So Mark Hey, b. iv. Art. i. sect. 17. xii. 29, 32. Such texts are obviously in opposition to the idol-gods of the heathen.

John x. 34—36, has been already explained pp. 98—101.

Our Lord's assumption of the title of "Son of man," Hey, ib. and his offering prayer to his Father, are referrible to his *human nature*.

Thus it will be seen, that the orthodox scheme of the Trinity is consistent with the *whole of Scripture*, while every other system is found to conflict with some important portions of it. The language implying some kind of *subordination* in the Son and Holy Ghost, is accountable by it; the many and various *lofty* expressions touching them, are accountable by *no other*. If difficulties still remain, there is none comparable with that of supposing the Father to have permitted the Son and Holy Ghost to be thus spoken of, unless they are truly God.

On this subject of the *Subordination* in the Trinity, the following works, already referred to, may be consulted.

Bull, D. F. N. sect. iv. Waterland, Pref. to vol. ii. pp. xv—xvii. vol. iii. pp. 23; 163—5; 399, 400; 483—487; vol. iv. “Farther Vindic. of Christ’s Divinity.” Potter, latter part. Cudworth, v. iii. 139, &c. Pearson, 46—50; 382: Hey, b. iv. Art. v. sect. xiv. Horsley, Tracts 291—297. Whitby, Tract, p. 61. And “Reply to the Travels of an Irish Gentleman in search of a Religion.” pp. 80—82.

ERRATA.

P. 38, l. 17, *for* " would," *read* " could."

p. 41, l. 17, *for* " spritual," *read* " spiritual."

p. 48, note, l. 6, *for* " here spoken of," *read* " spoken of in John i. 3."

The passage referred to in l. 9, of the text, is Rom. i. 20.

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